

Teaching *The Odyssey*: An Ancient Poem in Modern Times

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth M. Dalton". The signature is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Elizabeth" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dalton".

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Abstract

The Odyssey is an epic poem that nearly every high school student reads. However, in order to truly grasp its importance, it must be taught in a way that involves the students. This ancient piece of literature is a building block for many other works that students read, and therefore is of upmost importance. Through *The Odyssey*, teachers are able to teach epic similes, metaphors, literary references, allusions, Greek culture, and overall themes. Using this piece of literature, students learn about ancient mythology, Homer, and the switch from oral tradition to written language. It is significant in all these ways and more, and so therefore I have created a resource for teachers who teach *The Odyssey*. It includes pre-reading strategies, discussion questions, and quizzes. It has numerous examples of activities, ideas for graded discussions, and several class projects that can be done in the post-reading stage of a unit. Through this resource, teachers can focus on *involving* their students instead of slaving away for hours in the planning stage.

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Author's Statement

The Odyssey. Most high school freshmen hear these two words and cringe. They say things such as, "This book is so *old*," or "Why would we have to read something this *long*?" The response to these statements and questions isn't simple or easy to explain. However, we as teachers realize that *The Odyssey* is a vast and important work, overflowing with literary devices, motifs, and several lessons that only an epic poem can teach our students, such as epic similes. From their disgruntled responses, we also come to the conclusion that for most of them, it is their first contact with the ancient world and the literature of that period. After all, this book is more than twenty-eight hundred years old! Therefore, I say to you, it is *very* important how this piece of literature is taught. It matters how students see *The Odyssey* because it is one of the first major works that they study. It must be a meaningful encounter with many different teaching strategies employed to keep their attention.

During my student-teaching semester, I taught a curriculum in which *The Odyssey* was our main focus. Due to my lack of teaching experience, resources, and time, *The Odyssey* was not taught to the best of my ability. Those six weeks were difficult for me, not only because it was my first time full-time teaching experience, but because I so passionately loved this epic poem and was struggling to teach it meaningfully. While I had read *The Odyssey* approximately six times before having to teach it, I was in no way prepared. Being taught an epic poem and teaching an epic poem are surprisingly different! The major reason that I struggled was that I didn't have a good way to organize, combine, and make use of all of my resources. I had my own interpretations and experience with the epic, my mentor teacher's previous lesson plans and ideas, my knowledge of what others in my department were doing with this epic, and of course, the vast array of research that was available in the library and on the internet. However, as a new teacher, one doesn't have time to sort through everything. My head was barely above water, and I abhorred this struggle. I promised myself that when I finished student-teaching, I would put together a resource for myself and others.

Therefore, the main objective for my project is to help teachers teach *The Odyssey* (Fagles edition) to high school freshmen and sophomores in the most meaningful way possible. I firmly believe that the teaching is augmented by solid resources, and I wish not only that I would have had more resources available when teaching this epic poem, but also that I would have used the resources that I did have in a more constructive way. I am positive that had my resources been organized in an easily accessible fashion, I would have been a better teacher. Therefore, my project's main purpose is to give new teachers, or any teachers who teach *The Odyssey*, a "resource of resources" to help them teach the epic poem to the best of their ability.

If I learned one thing from my student-teaching experience, it is that teachers don't enjoy being limited. In other words, the more options the better. For this project, my goal isn't to limit teachers by creating a unit plan with a day-by-day

agenda. Instead, I wish to present a plethora of ideas from which they may pick and choose what works best for them. I could never assume to know what another teacher's students need; therefore, I am simply supplying them with a cornucopia of options for pre-reading strategies, discussion, study, and passage-related questions, quizzes, engaging activities, activity resources, graded discussion guides, and post-reading projects. I believe that in this way, teachers will be able to have resources of varying categories all in one place. My mentor teacher once told me, "Chelsea, good teaching isn't planning. It's not observing others. It's not researching. It's all of those things at the same time." I have learned that good teaching takes time, energy, and effort. Solid lessons come from planning, research, observing, and most importantly of all, combining these resources to present students with exactly what they need. In order to help other teachers strive for this goal, I have focused my project on doing the grunt work for them. Numerous resources are here, so that they can spend their time on those who deserve it most: their students.

Pre-Reading Strategies Rationale

In this section, it is my goal to give a “set-up” for many of the activities, discussions, and projects that I plan to do throughout the twenty-four books of *The Odyssey*. Through this introduction, teachers will have a basis for constructing many of the lesson plans that will be included in this resource. There are many new concepts and ancient ideas presented within *The Odyssey*, and providing some pre-reading lessons, activities, and strategies will truly help students grasp these new concepts before ever picking up the poem.

1. What does “HOME” mean to you? (Homework assignment)

Send a letter like this to your students:

Tonight, for homework, you are going to draw! Before we start reading the *Odyssey*, I want each of you to think hard about what “home” means to you. What does it look like? How does home feel? What kinds of things are in your “home”? Do you have more than one home? Illustrate “home” on an 8.5 by 11 sheet of paper. Be creative and use color! Then, write 1-2 sentences about what home means to you on the bottom of your illustration. Once we realize what home means to us personally, we will understand more of Odysseus’ actions on his 20-year journey home.

Following up on this assignment:

The next day in class, allow your students to come forward in front of the class to talk about what they drew, why they drew it, and further explain what home truly means to them. Throughout *The Odyssey*, refer back to this activity when students give Odysseus a hard time for his actions on his way home. Allow them to relate to his character by recalling the significance and memories associated with their own homes.

2. Introduction Lesson Plan for Plot Wall Activity

Creating The Odyssey Characters

- Activity for today:
 - Students will read about various characters from the *Odyssey*.
 - Have them grab a packet of *Odyssey* characters on their way into class. This is a great thing for them to have as we read the novel in the coming weeks – many names and characters are easily confused.
 - They will then create a poster for their assigned character.
 - Students will create a “wall web” where all the posters will be placed and the relationship between characters can be shown by attaching yarn from one character to another and adding text to cite the relationship.
 - Show several examples from last year so that they get the idea. Tape them up on the board.

Study, Discussion, and Passage-Related Questions Rationale

While the title is simply “Discussion Questions,” I have divided these questions into three categories: Study Questions, Discussion Questions, and Passage-Related Questions.

It is my vision that study questions should be plot-based, easy to answer, and sometimes even closed-questions, simply to get the conversation started. Many times, during the weeks I did my student-teaching, I would dive right into discussion and my students would be confused. I realized that discussion can go much further and get much deeper if everyone understands the basic plot first. These study questions clear up confusion and allow for students who may not have read as closely as they should have to still participate in the discussion as a whole. For all of these reasons, the study questions are listed first.

Next, I have listed the discussion questions. These questions are posed to help students think more critically and go further than the text. Some impose today’s morals and values on Odysseus’ time. Some ask the students to put themselves in the shoes of the various characters. Some are meant to help the students become problem-solvers or prediction-makers. Overall, these questions make up the bulk of the discussion and can often take ten or more minutes to really discuss and flesh out.

Last, I have listed passage-related questions. While I always like to end class with a specific quotation of a passage and analysis of those lines, these questions can also be interspersed with the discussion questions. Some more difficult books may require a chronological discussion in order for the students to understand all that happened. The point of these questions is to look at a small amount of text and decide its implications for the epic as a whole. Good passages usually contain many literary devices, too, such as epic similes, personification, irony, etc., so these are also good ways to teach literary devices in context.

Overall, these discussion questions can be used in a variety of ways, which will be up to each individual teacher. I have listed them in the order that made most sense to me, yet much can be done with the layout and format. Also, some books have many more questions, as they are the books that would fit best with a graded discussion for an entire class period (lesson plans are included later in this resource). Another note is that the first several books have many more study questions while the later books have more thought-provoking questions, because students become closer readers of the text as the epic continues.

For this section of my thesis, I adapted information from Sheryl Blair, Al Drake, and Susan Harris, whose websites are listed in the Works Cited.

Book 1

Study Questions:

- Who is the narrator speaking to in the first stanza?
- Where is Odysseus at the beginning?
- Where is Poseidon during this book?
- What has happened to Aegisthus and why is Zeus upset about it?
- What does Zeus say is the reason Poseidon hates Odysseus?
- Who are we told has beautiful braids? Why might this detail be important?
- As whom does Athena disguise herself? Why?
- Where is Telemachus when we first see him?
- Before asking his guest questions, what does Telemachus do for him?
- Identify each of the following: (a) Phemius, (b) Calypso, (c) Ogygia, (d) "the Wayfinder" ["the guide, the giant-killer"] (e) Achaia
- Why are the people feasting in Odysseus' palace?
- What advice does Athena give Telemachus?
- About what does the bard sing which upsets Penelope?
- What is Penelope's father's name?
- How does Telemachus treat his mother?
- Who are the two named suitors?
- What three ways do the suitors entertain themselves?
- Identify Eurykleia and Laertes.
- What does the nurse do with Telemachus' tunic?
- What is Telemachus' blanket?

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Homer begins the work by having Zeus discuss Aegisthus' murder? What idea might he be planting in his readers' minds?
- What customs can we see dealing with how one is to treat strangers? What do these customs suggest about what is considered good manners? Do these still hold true today?
- What does Telemachus' treatment of his mother show about the views of the Achaeans toward women?
- Why would a poem that purports to tell the story of Odysseus actually begin by discussing his son and what was happening at home?
- What kinds of limits do the gods have? What does this suggest about the way ancient Greeks perceived the gods?
- Many people question whether the Achaeans believed there was such a thing as free will. Reread Zeus' comments on Aegisthus. Did he choose what he did or did the gods choose it?

Passage Questions:

Page 77: Invocation to the Muse; survey of Odysseus' condition in the 10th year of his wanderings. "The whole of the action and most of the principal persons are introduced in the first few hundred lines." (D. Page) What is missing from the **proem** (the opening lines)? How does it define Odysseus? Why is Poseidon angry? As you read on, ask whether the action goes as the proem says it will.

Pages 78-80: Council of the gods on Olympus. What types of gods does Homer present? How do they match your expectations? Why is Aegisthus singled out by Zeus? What kind of system of morality does Zeus invoke? Why is Athena so concerned with Odysseus? Why is Zeus so surprised with her plea? Note that in the line ending her speech, the words "dead set against," *odusso*, puns on the hero's name...

Pages 81-86: Athena goes disguised to Ithaca to persuade Telemachus to seek news of his father. What is happening in Ithaca? What kind of person is Telemachus? How old is he? What does he need? Why does Athena mention Orestes to him? Is her story about him complete? And why start in Ithaca, not with Odysseus? Note the concern with hospitality, which will be a key theme throughout the epic.

Book 2

Study Questions:

- How, according to Antinous, do the suitors view Penelope's reluctance?
- Why do they think they are justified in behaving as they do?
- What form does an omen take?
- Who are some people who appear to be on the side of the prince?

Discussion Questions:

- How well does Telemachus handle the suitors' chief, Antinous, and his self-justification?
- What are we able to learn about Telemachus in this book? What kind of a character is he?
- Do you think Halitherses is correct in his prediction?
- Who are the suitors in relevance to Telemachus? What does this mean for their relationship?

Book 3

Study Questions:

- How does Athena help Telemachus prepare to meet the old King Nestor?
- What exactly does Nestor tell Telemachus about the War and the return home?

Discussion Questions:

- What is the purpose of this book? Why is it important that Telemachus go and visit old Nestor, aside, of course, from the fact that he needs news of his father Odysseus?
- Why does he dwell upon the fate of Agamemnon, killed by Aegisthus, the lover of Clytemnestra?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Lines 111-125: How does Nestor feel about the Trojan War? How is this going to affect the plot in this book and throughout the story?
- Lines 152-197: What are some of the disagreements that arises between the different victors of the Trojan War? What is the purpose of bringing up these disagreements? What does it suggest about war and its consequences?

Book 4

Study Questions:

- What are Menelaus and Helen celebrating at the beginning of Book 4?
- Why does Menelaus welcome the two strangers to his feast?
- How does Helen know Telemachus is the son of Odysseus?
- How does Helen ensure that no men will cry any longer at her feast?
- How did Odysseus infiltrate Troy's walls? What does this tell us about Odysseus' character?
- How does Menelaus react to the Ithacan news?
- What were the fates of Ajax and Agamemnon?
- What news does Menelaus give of Odysseus?
- When the suitors hear of Telemachus' journey to Pylos, what do they plot?
- How does Athena assuage Penelope's fears that she will lose her son?

Discussion Questions:

- How does Menelaus represent himself when he responds about his wanderings on the way home to Sparta? What does Telemachus, and therefore we as readers, learn about Menelaus as a character? Is his lesson similar to Nestor's in any way?
- Why does Menelaus still value and accept Helen, even though her elopement with Paris led to the Trojan War? How would you feel if you were Menelaus? Should he trust her?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Lines 377-514: How might Menelaus' story about the Old Man of the Sea, Proteus, be instructive to Telemachus in his quest to find his father? Why, for

that matter, would Menelaus' response to the knowledge Proteus gives him be instructive for Odysseus? What is the symbolic meaning of the use of the seal disguises? What is the meaning of Proteus' ability to change shapes? Do Menelaus and his men in some sense also change shapes by using a disguise? What is the meaning of all these transformations?

Book 5

Study Questions:

- Who is Calypso?
- How long does Odysseus stay on her island? Why?
- How does Odysseus respond to the shipwreck?
- Who intervenes in a divine way in this book?

Discussion Questions:

- What sort of character is Calypso? As readers, do we like her or dislike her? Why?
- What is the source of Calypso's power over Odysseus? Did your view of him change in this book?
- To what extent does she help Odysseus or hinder him once the decision to let him go is forced upon her?
- What does Calypso rant about in her discussion with Hermes? Do we agree with her?

Book 6

Study Questions:

- Who are the new characters we meet in this book?
- What are their relationships like?
- What is Odysseus' appearance when he first comes across other humans? Why is it like that?

Discussion Questions:

- How is the behavior of Nausicaa, the young Phaeacian princess who discovers Odysseus washed up on the shore, appropriate to the situation? What makes her an admirable character?
- How does Odysseus treat Nausicaa?
- What is Odysseus' reaction when he first meets her, and does he have any alternatives?
- What symbolism is involved with Ino's veil or the olive trees Odysseus sits under? What can we make of these items?

Book 7

Study Questions:

- What disguise does Athena take on in this book? Why?

- How else does she help disguise Odysseus? For what purpose?

Discussion Questions:

- What sort of kingdom is Phaeacia? How well is it governed, judging from the way the King relates to his family and subjects, and the way he receives the suppliant washed up on his shores?
- How might the impression Odysseus gives to Phaeacia be significant for Odysseus' subsequent return to Ithaca? What Greek value does this represent? Can we make some assumptions about what may have happened without Athena's help?
- How does Odysseus act in this book? Is he proud, humble, scared? How does he act toward Queen Arete? Again, what are we learning about him?
- What did you make of King Alcinous' offer of Nausicaa's hand in marriage?
- What does Odysseus say when Arete questions him sharply and asks him to reveal his identity? Why is this a significant part of the story?

Book 8

Study Questions:

- Who is the harper? What is his purpose?
- What effect does he have upon Odysseus?
- Who has the nerve to challenge Odysseus in this book?
- How does Odysseus respond to the challenge?
- How are Odysseus' brains and brawn shown in this episode?
- What is an example of dramatic irony present here?
- What are some archetypes used in this book?

Discussion Questions:

- Demodocus sings again later in the book - again, with what effect on Odysseus? Is the latter's response different from what we would expect of modern-day "heroes"?
- Why might Odysseus cover his tears?
- We see many sides of Odysseus in this book. Did any of your impressions of him change? Why or why not?
- Is it possible for one character to possess hubris *and* humility? How so? Give a specific character and the ways in which he or she has both characteristics.
- What is the significance of Demodokos' song about the love affair of Ares and Aphrodite? How do the gods react to the revelation of the adultery? Why?
- Think about Poseidon's reaction to the event. Is it different from the other gods'? How does Odysseus behave toward Demodokos? Why?

Passage – Related Questions:

- Lines 161-165: Consider very carefully Odysseus' response to being challenged. Which of Odysseus' qualities shine through in this episode of

athletic competition? What is the wisdom implicit in this speech? Does Odysseus' subsequent throwing of discus contradict this wisdom?

Book 9

Study Questions:

- When does Odysseus reveal his identity? Why?
- How has he been careful in keeping that information to himself in Books 5-8?

Discussion Questions:

- List Odysseus' tales in the order that he tells them. What patterns of meaning do you find emerging from this order?
- Patterns aside, what do the individual stories Odysseus recounts tell us about him and his men? For example, what makes Odysseus a worthy leader? What mistakes does he make while leading his men? How is he better than his men? What kinds of dangers are involved due to his strengths?
- Why is it important that Odysseus recount all his wanderings as past events? Why doesn't Homer simply construct his epic as a linear (i.e. "straight-line") progression of events from the Trojan War onward?
- Why might Polyphemus only have one eye? What does this cannibalistic monster represent or symbolize?
- What are your opinions about Odysseus' hubristic action at the end of this book?
- What do you think about Odysseus' and his crew's actions and behavior during the raid of Ismarus?

Book 10

Study Questions:

- What does Circe do to Odysseus' men?
- What have they done to offend her or what weakness do they show?
- Who is Odysseus ordered to consult with at the end of this book?
- Why don't Odysseus' men return home when they are in close sight of it?

Discussion Questions:

- What poor decision does Odysseus do in this book? For what cause?
- Is it ever acceptable/justified to do something bad to achieve something good? Think of modern day examples.
- What is the significance of the death of Elpenor?
- If you are Odysseus, after the bag of winds incident, what do you do?
- We find out at the end of this book that Odysseus has to go on another journey. What do you think will happen next? Who might he meet? Where might he go? When might he finally arrive home? Make some predictions!

Passage Questions:

- Page 231—What are the crew's thoughts? What does this show us about the nature of man?
- Page 232—We notice a lack of hospitality. Why does it happen?
- Page 233 – What/who is to blame in this situation?
- Page 234—What's happening to his men?
- Page 236—What does this show us about Odysseus? How can good come of grief? Has Odysseus' crew not learned the same lessons as he throughout the war?
- Page 241— What poor decision does Odysseus make here?
- Pages 244-45—What phase of the heroic pattern do we see in this book?
- Page 245—He must go on another journey. Why?

Book 11

Study Questions:

- What does Odysseus learn from his mother in Hades?
- What other characters does Odysseus speak with, and what does he learn from them?

Discussion Questions:

- In general, how would you characterize Odysseus' attitude towards his journey to the Underworld? What does the episode tell us about him?
- What is the Greek Underworld (Hades) like? How is it like or unlike the Christian Hell? What does this reflect about the Greek values we have come to know so far?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Lines 112-127: What is the lesson that Teiresias teaches Odysseus concerning the problem of avoiding death and safely returning home?

Book 12

Study Questions:

- Who is the only survivor after this book?
- Who are Scylla and Charybdis?
- Why are Odysseus and his men not allowed to touch the cattle?
- Who are the Sirens? Why are they so dangerous?

Discussion Questions:

- How do Poseidon and Zeus interact in this book? What is the balance of power between them?
- How does Zeus assert his authority?
- Odysseus returns to Circe's island after his visit to Hades. What adventures still await him? Again, what do those adventures tell us about Odysseus as a hero?
- What is the meaning of the dangers posed by Scylla and Charybdis? What might the monsters symbolize?
- Why must the Greek adventurers refrain from raiding the cows of Helios?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Lines 136-142: What are Circe's warnings to Odysseus after he returns from the underworld? Why are they so important? What literary device is in use here?

Book 13

Study Questions:

- How much does Odysseus reveal about his identity when he returns?
- How does Athena help Odysseus in this book?
- Who does Odysseus lie to in this book?

Discussion Questions:

- How do Poseidon and Zeus interact in this book? What is the balance of power between them?
- How does Zeus assert his authority?
- How is this book pivotal regarding the action of the Odyssey as a whole? What necessary qualities does Odysseus show in this first step of his return to power? Does he lean towards humility or hubris?
- We see a lot of "wisdom through suffering" in this book. Where do we notice it? Who besides Odysseus displays this type of wisdom?
- Does Odysseus fit the "wise old man" archetype? How so? In what specific ways?
- Odysseus lies outright several times in this part of the epic. What would have happened had he not? What are your feelings about his character at this point?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 240 – How does Odysseus handle his return to Ithaca?

Book 14

Study Questions:

- What does Odysseus learn about the occurrences in Ithaca during his absence?

- Who does Odysseus pretend to be? Who does he confide in?
- Odysseus tests Eumaeus' hospitality one more time before they go to bed. What ritual do they seem to partake in?

Discussion Questions:

- Eumaeus tells Odysseus that Penelope and Telemachus will never believe that a beggar has news of Odysseus. Why would he say this? What is the situation leading up to Odysseus' return that may lead his wife and son to avoid conversations with strangers about him?
- What parallels are there between Odysseus' lie about who he is and what really happened to him and his men? Why would there be so many similarities?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Lines 43-45: How does Eumaeus show his loyalty? What are our impressions of Eumaeus?
- Line 63: Why does Homer use the pronoun "you" in reference to Eumaeus? What effect does this give the paragraph? Why might the narrator put us, the readers, into the position of Odysseus' swineherd?
- Page 304: What is Eumaeus' description of the suitors like? What does this show about these men?
- Lines 196-200: What is the play on words here? What is going on?
- Page 313: What do we learn about Greek hospitality here?

Book 15

Study Questions:

- What pieces of advice and warning does Athena give Telemachus as he's unable to sleep?
- What prophecy happens that precedes Telemachus' departure?
- To what places did the setting shift in this book? You should be marking them well so you are able to follow along.
- How did Odysseus' mother treat Eumaeus?
- How did Eumaeus end up in Ithaca? What big idea comes out through his story?
- Who interprets the prophecy at the end of this book?

Discussion Questions:

- While Menelaus is unsure how to interpret the prophecy, who steps in? How does this person interpret the prophecy? What comparison is made? What does this show about the cast of characters involved?
- How does Odysseus test Eumaeus? Why does he feel the need to do this again? What does this show about both Odysseus and his relentlessness, and Eumaeus and his unflagging loyalty?
- What does Eumaeus tell Odysseus about Penelope? Why do you think this is? How does this move the plot of this book along?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 62: What literary device did you mark here?
- Line 66-68: What imagery reveals Telemachus' newfound determination of purpose?
- Line 78: What big idea is summarized here?
- Lines 125-130 and page 144 are remarkably similar. What is the effect of this? What literary devices are contained in Menelaus' speech to Telemachus?
- Lines 325-326: What can sometimes be a problem with Greek hospitality?

Book 16

Study Questions:

- How does Eumaeus greet Telemachus?
- What errand is Eumaeus sent on?
- What are the three major points of strategy in Odysseus' plan?
- What does Antinous try to get the suitors to do?
- Who offers a different perspective?
- How does Penelope learn of what the suitors are thinking?
- How does Penelope react to this information?
- Which of the suitors attempts to reassure her?

Discussion Questions:

- Why does Odysseus reveal his identity to Telemachus? How does Odysseus look when he reveals himself to his son? Why? How does Telemachus react when Odysseus identifies himself? What do you think is the significance of this scene?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 49: What Greek value are we seeing in this passage? Does this show us anything about Telemachus as a person or is this something we simply expect from the Greeks? How can we compare this situation to our lives as Americans?
- Line 118: Odysseus makes a moving argument here. Can we not help but feel compassion and pride for him?
- Line 342: Telemachus urges Odysseus to reconsider his plan. What are your reactions to this bold statement? How has Telemachus altered his path to manhood?

Book 17

Study Questions:

- What does Telemachus leave out of his "true" story when he talks to Penelope; what does he include? How does Theoclymenus contribute to the scene?
- Where has Argos been lying in the absence of his master?
- What is Odysseus' reaction to seeing Argos?
- Who throws a footstool at Odysseus?

Discussion Questions:

- Why would Homer compare Penelope to "Artemis or golden Aphrodite" when she comes down the stairs? What image is relayed to the reader?
- How does Odysseus handle his "humiliation"? Does he seem more at ease with it than Eumaeus and Telemachus? If so, why?
- Why do even the other suitors take exception when a stool is thrown at Odysseus? What Greek value may come into play here? What does this reveal about several of the suitors specifically?
- Why does Penelope want to talk to the stranger? At this point, what do you think she knows? Explain.
- How does Telemachus act in this book compared to last? Why?
- There is a LOT of foreshadowing going on in this book. What do you think is going to happen soon? Make some predictions!

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 135: Here is one of the most interesting epic similes of the entire epic. Yet we are seeing it for the second time. Let's look at it closely. What does this comparison imply? What literary devices are present here? What must Homer have wanted his reader to understand by putting it in twice?
- Line 254: What do we learn about Odysseus in this passage? How hard must it have been? Why is self-control so important at this specific moment? What's ironic about this situation?
- Line 271: What is said about Melanthius in this book? Why use "mutt" and not "dog" in this comparison?

Book 18

Study Questions:

- What are some of the descriptors for Penelope in this book? What are some for Odysseus? Are these new or different in any way? What might Homer want us to feel about this characters now that Odysseus is home.
- Why does Irus quarrel with "the stranger?"
- What is Antinous' reaction to the unfriendly words Irus speaks to Odysseus?
- What is the prize for the beggar who wins the fight?
- Who is Penelope's father?

Discussion Questions:

- Has Telemachus fully reached manhood yet? What signs indicate that he has? What signs indicate that he still has some distance to go? Why is this important? What is the symbol of manhood?
- What is the implication of the maids' inappropriate behavior?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 96: We see the epitome of hubris here in the suitors' actions. Why might they act this way around Odysseus?
- Line 145: What is Odysseus' intention in talking to Amphinomus?

- Line 180: What does Athena inspire Penelope to do? Why would this seem ridiculous at first, but on second thought seems quite sensible?
- Line 201: What does Penelope tell Eurynome? Was anyone really sad when she spoke like this? What was she trying to do?
- Line 380: How does Odysseus respond to Melanthe when insulted? While his self-control seems to wane, is it acceptable?
- Line 467: Why might Amphinomus stand up for Odysseus? What does he risk in doing so?

Book 19

Study Questions:

- We continue to see epithets describing Penelope and Odysseus. What are some in this book?
- What ruse does Odysseus tell Telemachus to carry out at the beginning of the book?
- Where does Odysseus tell Penelope he is from? What does this story have in common with the one he tells Eumaeus?
- How does Penelope react to what she hears of Odysseus? How does Odysseus react to her reaction?
- What prediction does Odysseus give to Penelope?
- How did Odysseus obtain the scar that Eurycleia recognizes?
- What does Odysseus say to Eurycleia?
- What is the dream which Penelope describes to Odysseus? How does he interpret it?

Discussion Questions:

- What does the stranger ask Penelope not to ask him? Why? Does she ask him anyway? Do we think Penelope knows at this point? Why?
- How does the stranger affect Penelope? Why is she favorably disposed toward the stranger?
- How does Penelope plan to test the suitors to see which one she will marry? Why is this a major risk on Penelope's part? Any predictions here?
- Why doesn't Odysseus simply tell Penelope who he is?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 42: What Greek belief system plays a role here? Also, why does Odysseus respond to Telemachus as he does? Again, is Telemachus straying from the path of manhood?
- Line 97: Penelope lashes out at Melanthe. How is this different from what we know her to be as a character? Is it deserved? What is so distasteful about Melanthe? What has she done/continues to do?
- Line 545: How do we know that Eurycleia is trustworthy?
- Line 582: Why the comparison to Pandora? What is the effect?
- Line 679: What does Penelope do after the contest starts? What does this show about her knowledge? Is this an act or is she crying for real? Explain, using evidence from the poem.

Book 20

Study Questions:

- What does Athena do in this book to boost Odysseus' spirits? What does she do to test them?
- What does Philoetius have in common with Melanthius and Eumaeus?
- What is Penelope doing at the end of the book?

Discussion Questions:

- How is Odysseus insulted by Cteppis? How does Odysseus react? What about Telemachus?
- Why do the suitors behave even more inappropriately than usual?
- Why are the stranger's interactions with Melanthius and Philoetius presented chronologically within the poem? What does this do for the plot of the story?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 15: How does this epic simile enhance the plot and Odysseus as a character? Even after all this time we are still learning things about him!
- Line 203: How does Philoetius demonstrate his loyalty?
- Line 382: How does Telemachus stand up for his mother?

Book 21

Study Questions:

- What must the stringer of the bow do with his shot?
- What is Antinous' and Eurymachus' reaction to the challenge?
- Melanthius is ordered to do what in order to make the bow easier to bend?
- How does Odysseus prove his identity to the cowherd and the swineherd?

Discussion Questions:

- Penelope's taking the bow from its hiding place is one of the most moving moments in this part of the poem – why?
- In what way do Telemachus' words after "giving up" show him to be a worthy son?
- What is the purpose of the "biography" of the bow?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 451: Why did Homer use this simile? What does it add to the passage? What does it reveal about Odysseus?
- Interesting commentary from the translator, Robert Fagles: "In many ways one of the most moving moments in the poem for me is when Odysseus strings his bow at the end of the 21st book. The simile for stringing the bow describes the hero as 'an expert singer skilled at lyre and song' who tunes his harp to a new pitch. That means the bow, the killing instrument, is really a musical instrument at the same time. Story-telling at that point becomes action" (Fagles 2)

Book 22

Study Questions:

- How do the other suitors appeal to Odysseus?
- How does Eurymachus react to Mentor?
- Who tests the strength and courage of Odysseus and Telemachus?
- The dead suitors are compared to what kind of creatures?

Discussion Questions:

- What is Antinous doing when Odysseus shoots him? Why is he the first victim? As the reader, what are your reactions to his death?
- How much does Athena help Odysseus, and how much of the victory is his?
- Which appendages does Melanthius lose? Where do they end up? (Remember Antinous' threats to send Irus to Echetus in the beginning of Book 18; and a similar threat to Odysseus in Book 21). Why is his death so horrible?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 7: As the first death of the suitors, Antinous' demise should be read aloud in class! What kind of imagery words does Homer use?
- Line 78: How does Odysseus respond to their pleas? Do you blame him?
- Line 235: We see a completely different side of Athena at this point. What is her motive? How does she encourage Odysseus? What does she demand?
- Line 316: What two things is this epic simile comparing? What effect does it give this book? List some adjectives next to this passage that describe the mood.

Book 23

Study Questions:

- What do Penelope and Eurycleia argue about at the beginning of this book?
- Why is Telemachus irritated at his mother?
- What (who) does Penelope believe caused the deaths of the suitors?
- What future problems does Odysseus see as a result of the killing of the suitors?
- What does Odysseus want those outside his palace believe is happening within the palace?
- Where does Penelope order Eurycleia to make up the bed? How does Odysseus react to this?
- Who made the bed and what is remarkable about it?
- What reason does Penelope give for not recognizing Odysseus earlier?
- Who made Helen act as she had according to Penelope?
- Who is responsible for holding Dawn at bay while Penelope and Odysseus spend their first night together?
- Where is Odysseus headed at the end of the book?

Discussion Questions:

- What does Odysseus tell Penelope about his next journey? What does this say about their relationship? What was this conversation like?

- What are Penelope's reasons for testing Odysseus?
- What is at stake for her in this intense, emotional situation?
- How might she feel about Odysseus' unwillingness to trust her? (Consider the fact that he trusts his son and his shepherd...)

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 90: What do you think Penelope knows at this point? She pauses before she says "the one who killed them." What does this show?
- Line 111: Does Telemachus get out of line here? How does he treat Penelope and why? Is it necessary?
- Line 203: Why does Odysseus get so angry about the bed? Is he testing his wife? If so, in what way?
- Line 259: This is just a beautiful piece of the epic. Why do we, as readers, enjoy this passage so much?
- Line 388: How does Athena help Odysseus yet again? Is her job ever over?!

Book 24

Study Questions:

- How does Odysseus prove to his father who he is?
- What reasons does Eupithes give when encouraging revenge on Odysseus?

Discussion Questions:

- What different views of their fates do Agamemnon and Achilles seem to hold?
- When they speak to Agamemnon and Achilles how do suitors' shades feel about their responsibility for Odysseus' actions?
- How does Odysseus test his father Laertes, now living a hard life, after the slaughter has been accomplished? What's the point of testing his father?
- What does Athena (disguised as Mentor) do to insure that the families will not succeed in revenging the suitors' deaths? What does she do to ensure that Odysseus won't cause further havoc?
- Without Athena, what would have happened?
- Was Odysseus happy in the end? What about the families? Was there really peace in Ithaca?

Passage-Related Questions:

- Line 352: Why is talking to Laertes so hard for Odysseus? What, physically, does Homer say happens to him?
- Line 478: What argument does Antinous father make about going to war with Odysseus? What is his motive? His goal?
- Line 584: What does Athena call for here? Does the title of the book make more sense to us now? Do we really get our happy ending though? Why or why not?

Quizzes Rationale

There are two types of quizzes that I found to be very helpful when student-teaching. The first type is a narrative in which I asked the students to fill in the blanks of a summary of the book(s) they were required to read. Due to the fact that their homework every night was to read, annotate, and make a list of the characters they met in that book, I allowed them to use their character lists on these types of quizzes. The names in the *Odyssey* are hard to spell and pronounce, so they seemed to appreciate this and it also encouraged good note-taking skills and attention to detail (two skills my freshman needed to learn desperately!). This first type of quiz was helpful for longer books when the plot was a little more complicated. I simply took these narratives from SparkNotes, and created blanks for every character, place, or big idea that I wanted them to learn and know. I have provided an example from Book 1, and if you wish to have these for every book you can simply go their website and create your own tailored to your students' focus.

The second type of quiz was in short-answer format. These quizzes consisted of three to ten short-answer questions with room for the students to write two to five sentences for a response. This type of quiz worked better when there was a major event to be explained, and when the book(s) were less about new characters and places. These questions are still plot-based and not of the discussion type, however, because the goal is still to see if the students are reading. This type of quiz allowed me to see if the students were grasping the events of the book(s) that were assigned, and I tended to use them more often in the second half of the epic.

I have included both types of quizzes for each book in my thesis, as my goal is to create an abundant resource for teachers of *The Odyssey*. It is up to the teacher to decide which type of quiz to give for each book.

For this section of my thesis, I adapted information from Sheryl Blair, Al Drake, and Susan Harris, and SparkNotes whose websites are listed in the Works Cited.

Quizzes

Book 1

Use your character list and summary of events to fill in the story.

The narrator of the *Odyssey* invokes a _____, asking for inspiration as he prepares to tell the story of _____. The story begins ten years after the end of the Trojan War, the subject of the *Iliad*. All of the Greek heroes except Odysseus have returned home. Odysseus languishes on the remote island Ogygia with the goddess _____, who has fallen in love with him and refuses to let him leave. Meanwhile, a mob of suitors is devouring his estate in Ithaca and courting his wife, _____, in hopes of taking over his kingdom. His son, _____, an infant when Odysseus left but now a young man, is helpless to stop them. He has resigned himself to the likelihood that his father is dead. With the consent of Zeus, Athena travels to Ithaca to speak with Telemachus. Assuming the form of Odysseus's old friend _____, Athena predicts that _____ is still alive and that he will soon return to Ithaca. She advises Telemachus to call together the _____ and announce their banishment from his father's estate. She then tells him that he must make a journey to _____ and _____ to ask for any news of his father. After this conversation, Telemachus encounters Penelope in the suitors' quarters, upset over a song that the court bard is singing. Like Homer with the *Iliad*, the bard sings of the sufferings experienced by the Greeks on their return from Troy, and his song makes the bereaved Penelope more miserable than she already is. To _____'s surprise, _____ rebukes her. He reminds her that _____ isn't the only Greek to not return from Troy and that, if she doesn't like the music in the men's quarters, she should retire to her own chamber and let him look after her interests among the suitors. He then gives the suitors notice that he will hold an assembly the next day at which they will be ordered to leave his father's estate. _____ and _____, two particularly defiant suitors, rebuke Telemachus and ask the identity of the visitor with whom he has just been speaking. Although Telemachus suspects that his visitor was a goddess in disguise, he tells them only that the man was a friend of his father.

This quiz was taken, in its entirety, from a plot summary on SparkNotes.

Book 1 Quiz Questions

1. Who are the two particularly defiant suitors?
2. In a paragraph, describe the situation of Penelope and Telemachus in Ithaca.
3. How does the story begin *in medias res* or “in the middle of things?”
4. Who upsets Penelope to the point in which she weeps?
5. Where is Odysseus when the story begins?

Book 2 Quiz Questions

1. What are two pieces of advice Athena gives to Telemachus?
2. In what specific way has Penelope delayed the suitors’ advancement?
3. Who were the two suitors who yelled at Telemachus during the assembly?
4. Name two ways in which Athena intervenes on Telemachus’ behalf.

Book 3 Quiz Questions

1. What kind of ceremony is going on in the beginning of this book?
2. Why does King Nestor not have any information about Odysseus?
3. What does King Nestor tell Telemachus about Menelaus’ death?
4. What are the two pieces of advice that King Nestor gives to Telemachus?
5. Who does King Nestor send along with Telemachus to Pylos?
6. How does Athena help Telemachus in this book?

Book 4 Quiz Questions

1. What are Menelaus and Helen celebrating at the beginning of Book 4?
2. In a brief paragraph, tell the story of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, Orestes and Aegisthus.
3. When the suitors hear of Telemachus’ journey to Pylos, what do they plot?
4. Who tells Penelope of the suitors’ plan?

Book 5 Quiz Questions

1. Why does Calypso let Odysseus finally leave the island?
2. What does Odysseus do in order to get off Calypso’s island?
3. What does Poseidon do to Odysseus once he embarks on his journey?
4. Why does Leucothea tell Odysseus to do to save himself after Poseidon’s wrath?

5. Where did Odysseus decide to sleep?

Book 6 Quiz Questions

1. Who ruled the land where Odysseus ended up?
2. What task was his daughter doing when she discovered Odysseus?
3. What did Athena do to Odysseus after he bathed?
4. Why does Odysseus come into town separately than Nausicaa?

Book 7 Quiz Questions

1. Who does Odysseus need to win over to gain the favor of the King of the Phaeacians?
2. What does King Alcinous wish Odysseus would decide to do?
3. Who recognizes the clothing that Odysseus is wearing?
4. When does the mist disappear from around Odysseus? Why is this moment important to the story?

Book 8 Quiz Questions

1. Why does Athena make Odysseus more handsome again in this book? What is the precise reason?
2. Why was Odysseus crying during Demodocus's song?
3. What was the competition in which Odysseus finally decided to participate?
4. Why did he change his mind about being too tired to compete in the games?

Book 9 Quiz Questions

1. Explain the story of the Cyclops using at least four specific details.
2. Why can't Odysseus kill Polyphemus in the cave? Why wouldn't that be a wise decision?
3. How do Odysseus and his men escape?
4. What kind of creature is Polyphemus?
5. What different creatures does Odysseus encounter in this book?
6. Who is Polyphemus' father? Why is this a significant detail in the story?

Book 10 Quiz Questions

1. What did Antiphates and his wife do to the Odysseus's crewman when they stopped on his island (the first time)? What kind of people were they?
2. What does Circe do to Odysseus's crewmen?
3. Who helps Odysseus with the "Circe situation"? What cultural value does this represent?
4. Why won't the men (or Odysseus) leave Circe's island?
5. What journey does Circe tell Odysseus he must go on? Who must they speak to about directions home?
6. Who dies in this book? How so?

Book 11 Quiz Questions

1. When Odysseus finally sees Tiresias, what does Tiresias say to him?
2. Name/describe three people that Odysseus saw in Hades.
3. What warning does Agamemnon give to Odysseus?
4. Why doesn't Ajax speak to Odysseus?
5. What is Tantalus' punishment in hell? Hint: This is where we get the English word "tantalized."
6. What is Sisyphus' punishment in hell? Hint: This is where we get the English word "sisyphian."

Book 12 Quiz Questions

1. Who gives Odysseus advice this time? What is he told? Does he follow it?
2. Odysseus and his crew have to get through three obstacles in Book 12: Amphitrite, Scylla and Charybdis, Describe two of the three obstacles.
3. What happens with Odysseus's men and the Sun god Helios's cattle?

Book 13 Quiz Questions

1. After Odysseus finishes his story, what does King Alcinous tell all his people to give him?
2. Where do Odysseus's men leave him?
3. Who is angry at Odysseus' homecoming? Who pays for this anger?
4. Why doesn't Odysseus tell Athena who he is at first?
5. Why does Athena disguise Odysseus? As what does she disguise him?
6. Where is Athena headed at the end of this book?

Book 14 Quiz Questions

1. Who does Odysseus lie to in this book? What lies does he tell?
2. How does Eumaeus demonstrate his loyalty to Odysseus?
3. Why does Eumaeus say that Penelope won't believe that Odysseus will be home soon?

Book 15 Quiz Questions

1. What does Athena instruct Telemachus to do immediately at the beginning of this book? Who is he to meet up with before going home?
2. What are the omens that Telemachus sees? Who interprets them? What do they mean?
3. Who does Telemachus allow on board his ship? What exactly is his story? What Greek value does this show on Telemachus' part?

Book 16 Quiz Questions

1. How does Telemachus show the theme of Greek hospitality to "the beggar" after he arrives at the swineherd's home?
2. Describe the encounter between Telemachus and Odysseus when Odysseus reveals his true identity. Be specific!
3. What is their plan to take back the palace? Again, be specific!
4. Where do we see a change in Telemachus in this book? How is he different than before his journey?
5. What is the suitors' plan once they find out Telemachus is home?
6. Who is the first to greet Telemachus when he returns from his trip?
7. Describe in detail Telemachus' initial reaction to Odysseus' revelation.
8. Who is the "Fighter's Queen" and the "Queen of Tactics"?
9. Which suitor suggests that the suitors as a group should "strike first and kill him...seize his estates and worldly goods, carve them up between us, share and share alike"?
10. Which suitor says "I've no desire to kill Telemachus, not I—it is a terrible thing to shed the blood of kings"?
11. Who wishes to retrieve the gifts given to Telemachus by Menelaus and store them at the palace?

Book 17 Quiz Questions

1. What words did Theoclymenus add to Telemachus' report to Penelope on Odysseus' whereabouts?
2. Describe in detail Odysseus' encounter with Melanthius.
3. When does Argos die?
4. Who threw the stool at Odysseus?
5. Describe in detail Penelope's reaction to the stool-throwing incident and her subsequent actions.

Book 18 Quiz Questions

1. What happens at the end of Book 18 to break up the party?
2. What is Penelope inspired to do in this book? Why does Odysseus delight in this?
3. What does Penelope tell the suitors to entice them?
4. What are the similarities in how Melanthe and Melanthius react to Odysseus?
5. How does Odysseus react to Melanthe's taunting?

Book 19 Quiz Questions

1. What do Telemachus and Odysseus do to get ready for the slaughter of the suitors? Who lights the way?
2. How does "the stranger" describe Odysseus? What does he say to convince Penelope that he knew him?
3. Who washes Odysseus' feet? What does she discover? Why is this scene significant?
4. What does Penelope decide to do at the end of this book?
5. What does the contest consist of?

Book 20 Quiz Questions

1. Why do Penelope and Odysseus have trouble sleeping during the night? What is each worried about?
2. Who do Penelope and Odysseus pray to in the morning? What does each wish?

3. Whose murder are the suitors planning? Who encourages them to call it off?
What happens to encourage the calling off of the murder?
4. Who throws a cow's hoof at Odysseus? Who stands up to him? What is the suitors' reaction?
5. What do the suitors fail to notice is on the walls? What do they fail to notice on their faces?
6. What is the bad omen that occurs at the end of this book? Who interprets it?
What is the interpretation?

Book 21 Quiz Questions

1. What occurs in the storeroom when Penelope retrieves the bow? Why is this such a moving scene for Homer's readers?
2. Why don't the suitors want the "beggar" to try his hand at the bow?
3. What does Odysseus promise the men if they help him defeat the suitors?
Why would this be an awesome promise?
4. What do the suitors do when Odysseus grabs the bow? Who ridicules him?
What does this particular suitor say about Odysseus?
5. Who takes control, demanding that Odysseus be given a try?

Book 22 Quiz Questions

1. Who is killed first by Odysseus? Who is killed first by Telemachus? Describe their deaths using at least one good detail each.
2. Who rejoices at the sight of the dead suitors? What does Odysseus ask her to do for him?
3. What specific suitor blames Antinous for this horrible situation?
4. How are the maids killed? Who kills them? What do they have to do first?
5. Who is the last to die? How is he tortured? How is he killed?
6. What does Odysseus do last, after all of the deaths?

Book 23 Quiz Questions

1. How does Penelope react upon seeing the dining hall and Odysseus?
2. Who rebukes her for not having a warmer, more loving response?
3. What does Odysseus plan to do to cover up the murders?
4. What does Penelope order a servant to do in order to test Odysseus?

5. What does Odysseus still have to do even though he has returned home safely and killed all the suitors?

Book 24 Quiz Questions

1. Once the suitors tell their stories to Agamemnon and the other heroes in Hades, how does Agamemnon react to Odysseus' killing of all the suitors?
2. How does Odysseus prove who he really is to his father?
3. What happens when the townspeople and families of the suitors find out what Odysseus and his men did?
4. Once these men find out the gods were "with Odysseus" how do they change their reaction? Does it last?
5. What does Athena do at the end of the chapter/end of the entire book?

Activities Rationale

The “Activities” section is meant to provide numerous ideas, not only for *The Odyssey* but also for other novels, epic poems, and stories of any kind. These activities are organized by book in the epic (1-24) based on my own experience and from talking with other teachers who have paired these activities with these specific books. While some activities work better with specific passages and books, there is definitely a mix-and-match option. There are also several activities that you may use for every single book, such as the “plot wall” activity. While I don’t recommend doing an activity for every single book, I have provided activities for every book in order to make it more convenient for teachers. In this manner, a teacher can simply pick and choose which activities to do and with which books to do them.

Since I have tried many of these in my own classroom when teaching *The Odyssey*, I have also provided an “Activities Resources” section in the appendix that gives examples, lesson plans, and further resources for doing these activities in your classroom. Each activity is numbered. For easy reference, the corresponding resources in the resources section of this document will have the same number. For example, if there is a resource for activity number two, the resource will be labeled number two.

For this section of my thesis, I adapted information from Jim Burke and Jennifer McIntosh whose websites are listed in the Works Cited.

Activities

Book 1

1. **Journalists:** Act as Homer, the author of *The Odyssey*, and allow your students to be journalists. Offer to answer questions, give authorial statements, and clarify anything they didn't understand. This activity is great for the introduction of books because the students generally have a lot of plot questions that can be answered with simple statements of fact. It is also a good way to explain some cultural references and historical background.
2. **Pronunciation Key:** At the beginning of any book, pronunciation is always important. With Homer's *The Odyssey*, pronunciation challenges prevail. During the first couple days, have a pronunciation key passed out to the students. Pronounce each word together. Say the person or place loudly and clearly, and then have the students repeat twice. It's actually a lot of fun!
3. **Plot Wall:** Because many students are visual learners, the plot wall is an excellent activity for an extended, complicated literature such as *The Odyssey*. Have the students create the characters using art supplies (refer to pre-reading activities for lesson plan) and then hang them up on a wall of your classroom. Magnets on white boards also work well. At the beginning of class, walk the students through the events of the book(s) using the pictures on the wall. Use yarn to show relationships, and place names to show locations. Create other symbols such as marriage with rings, travel with boats, clothing with shirts and pants, and gifts with treasure chests. Students love to be helpers, and it's sometimes fun to hand out these other symbols, drawings, and place names as the students walk in your door. During the plot wall activity, have students come up when their plot point is being discussed. Page numbers of the passages when certain symbols occur are also good to write on the back of the symbol drawings. In order to appeal to more linear and list-making students, create a fill-in-the-blank sheet so that students can fill in the characters and movements of the plot as you go. Overall, this is a fun, engaging way to make sure your students know and understand what really happened in the book so that you can dive into the deeper meanings and situations in discussion.

Book 2

4. **Dear Diary:** Have the students keep a diary as if they were a character in the story. Encourage them to write down events that happen during the story and reflect on *how* they affected the character and *why*. Feelings, relationships with other characters, and character developments should be evident in their entries (McIntosh).
5. **Appointment Partners:** Students love when school becomes like the "real world" of adults. For this activity, give your students a sheet that looks like a day planner. It will have appointment slots from 8am to 4pm, with a line for a name under each time slot. Allow them to move throughout the classroom setting up "appointments" with classmates under each time slot. They may only meet once with each person, and they won't have room for everyone. When finished, explain that throughout the reading of *The Odyssey*, there will

be discussions and activities that will allow for partner work. In order to mix things up and avoid having the same partner every time, you as the teacher will announce what appointment they are to work with for that day. If it is a “3pm appointment day” then they will work with their 3pm appointment on the discussion questions or assignment for that day in class. Students *love* this idea and are always excited when it’s an appointment day!

Book 3

6. Big Idea Hunt: Establish the “big ideas” or themes, motifs, and symbols that you wish to trace throughout the epic poem. Give a couple of examples as to where you have seen them throughout the first three books. Then, give the students a Big Idea Chart to write down page numbers and quotes from other examples that they can find. This can be an individual, partner, or small group activity.

Book 4

7. Discussion Guide: Due to the many themes and motifs present in epic poems, especially in *The Odyssey*, the discussion guide is a valuable tool for working in groups. Choose a theme, cultural value, or big idea for students to focus on, and then allow them to trace it throughout the book(s) that are being discussed. Instead of specific discussion questions, allow students to come up with their own within their group. Require each student to have his or her book open, and to refer to page numbers and specific points when finding the theme, cultural value, or big idea. Give students a discussion guide sheet that has space for them to write what they end up discussing for each part of the book(s).

Book 5

8. The Kuglemass: Woody Allen wrote a story in which the character can throw any book into a time machine and it takes them inside the book and the era. Have the students write a journal about what they would do, say, or think if they “traveled” into *The Odyssey* at certain points in the book (Burke).

Book 6

9. Wardrobe: In mythology, many characters have disguises. However, hardly anyone has more disguises and costumes in his or her wardrobe than Athena does in *The Odyssey*. Throughout the first part of the epic, students get to know Athena as a variety of people. Divide the students into groups and give each one a disguise. Have them make it, using art supplies, and then ask them to write an explanation of *why* Athena chooses their disguise in certain instances. At the end of class, line up Athena’s wardrobe and have each group tell about the making of their disguise and the reasoning behind it. What does this mean for Athena’s relationship with Odysseus? What about with others in the poem? What does this say about divine intervention? (Burke).

Book 7

10. Letter Writing: Characters possess many feelings and relationships that are implied in the reading. Have the students write a letter from one character to another about their point of view, a specific situation occurring, or their thoughts and feelings about other characters in their environment. If you want to get more creative, use art supplies, postage stamps, envelopes, and

postcards. Letter contests are a fun and exciting way to engage the students and get them into the mindset of the characters in the book (McIntosh).

Book 8

11. Interrupted Conversations: As students read *The Odyssey*, it is easy to interject opinions when the characters are talking. Put the students into groups of three, and assign specific starting points for them to read. While one person reads aloud, the others listen, without their books, and simply interrupt when they have something to say. Once an interruption is made, the group discusses what that person says and thinks about the conversation of characters. When the discussion ends, another person starts reading a new passage or continues the old passage depending on how much of the passage they felt was covered. By allowing students to interrupt the characters, discussions become much more possible than when the student is reading at home. This activity also encourages students to dive deeper into character development and understanding the characters as people in the story (Burke).

Book 9

12. Plot Puzzle: When there are many small events surrounding a big event, the plot puzzle can be a great activity to discuss the crux of the book(s). The plot puzzle is a sheet that has nine interlocking puzzle pieces, with the center one being a bit larger. Students fill in the puzzle in one of two ways. The first way is that puzzle pieces 1-4 are small events leading up to the big event in the middle and pieces 6-9 are the consequences that arrived due to that main event. The second way is that the eight smaller pieces are simply events that stem from the main event.
13. Travel Brochure: Mapping is a fun way to make sure students know what is happening in the plot. In *The Odyssey*, have students create a travel brochure for Lotus Island, the Sirens adventure, the land of the Cyclops, the Island of the Winds experience, or even Ithaca itself. Why would someone want to travel here? What would they encounter? What are the dangers? What might they eat? Where might they sleep? Why do you recommend such a place? Thinking outside the box is creative, but providing details from the book also shows that students can describe what is taking place in the story.

Book 10

14. Controversial Quick-Writes: Students love to discuss ethics within stories. What is right? What is wrong? Where is the line? Start class with a controversial question about the characters' actions. For example, in Book 10, Odysseus cheats on his wife Penelope with Circe. Pose a question to the students about the ethics of this situation. Is it ever acceptable or even right to do something harmful, shameful, or upsetting in order to achieve a higher or long-term good? Give them a solid seven to nine minutes to write, with the explanation that you want a good two paragraph response. Then, lead into "think pair share" (the next activity listed) to discuss their answers.
15. Think Pair Share: First, give the students time to think about the question. Second, have each pair with a partner (or an appointment partner if that's how you wish to do things). During the pair time, encourage both partners to

read their answers, explain their thoughts, and discuss how they're feeling about the question, characters, and situation. During the pair time, partners are to work hard to come to an agreement in order to "share" with the class. When it comes time for sharing, call on different pairs to tell the class about their discussion. Allow for other pairs to respond. By giving students time to think on their own, pair with a classmate, and share with the class, students are forced to think on their own and work with others, two critical aspects of contemporary high school education.

Book 11

16. Board Diagram: While lecture and board notes may not be fun, they are sometimes necessary for understanding to occur. The board diagram combines lecture and notes with the plot wall activity described earlier. This strategy is best for books such as eleven when Odysseus meets many characters in the underworld. Draw a ladder at the top left hand of the board, to symbolize Odysseus' entrance. Draw a boat on the bottom right corner of your board to symbolize his exit. In between, post the character pictures of each person he meets, as well as some notes about what occurs in those conversations. Use sticky notes in a variety of colors to represent big ideas, cultural values, and literary devices present in the book. For a more engaging board diagram, leave blanks for the students to fill in with you. Also, place all the sticky notes on the side of the board for students to come up, grab, and place on the underworld timeline. Through displaying visually the contents of the book, students understand the plot. However, by asking them study and discussion questions as you go, and by leaving room for blanks and sticky notes, students understand deeper meanings and symbolism within the book(s) taught.

Book 12

17. Tableau: Acting a scene out is definitely a quick way to help students gain understanding. For this activity, create a still life setting of a scene you wish to discuss with your students. As they walk in the door, seek out some helpers and assign them their roles. For even more fun, use costumes and set design! As the rest of the students take their seats, explain that in order to learn more about the scene, someone must go up and touch a character within it. As each character is touched, he or she comes to life and gives the students their perspective about that scene. This would be even more engaging if you can recruit older students or other staff members to be your actors. By actually setting up certain scenes, the book comes alive to your readers and they can get into touch with character development, relationships, and perspective (Burke).

Book 13

18. The Woody Allen: Students love doing mock interviews, so this activity is a fun and engaging way to learn more about a character's perspective. In *Take the Money*, Allen interviews the parents of a man who became a bank robber. His goal was to get a deeper understanding of their son through their perspective. Have students write an imaginary interview with the friends and/or family of a character about whom they try to help you understand. Choose a character that disappears for a while from the story, or someone who commits a controversial act. Some examples would be interviewing

Odysseus' crewman for a deeper understanding of Odysseus himself, or asking Eurycleia about Penelope (Burke).

Book 14

19. Research: Bringing in outside research is a way to enhance background knowledge of a story. In Book 14, Homer uses the personal pronoun "you" to speak to Eumaeus. Read some possibilities about this and allow students to form their own opinions about what this might mean. Perhaps even ask them to bring in secondary research regarding this topic and see what they come up with.
20. Bloom's Taxonomy: While asking questions may seem like something that students do easily, asking discussion questions is a different matter. Students tend to ask basic, rudimentary questions, not having the foresight that those questions may lead to simple, one-word answers. In order to encourage solid discussion questions for graded discussions, hand out and explain Bloom's Taxonomy. In this activity, students actually bring their own discussion questions to the graded discussion. It is a good idea to require a specific number of questions, and to ask that those questions be from different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. If you do so, you may find that the discussion is more vibrant. (This idea and the resources for it were taken from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School.)

Book 15

21. Graded Discussion: While class discussions are always occurring and informally assessed, students truly respond to a graded discussion format. Set half of the desks up in a circle, and push the other half to the edges of your classroom. Make partners from your class lists, pairing talkative students with talkative students and quieter students with quieter students. This will ensure that people from each category are always in the conversation. Have your students come in and either sit down or stand behind their partners, since only half of the students are in the discussion at any given time. A full explanation and several handouts are available in the appendix.

Book 16

22. Open Mind: While reading any narrative, readers strive to enter the minds of characters. For this activity, draw an empty oval, meant to represent a head of one of the characters, on the board and have the students shout out symbols, words, thoughts, people, or images that are bouncing around in the mind of that character. Follow the board drawing with discussion of the contents. Another possibility is to have this as a quick-write in which each of the students makes his or her own empty mind and fills it with these things as homework. In this method, the discussion could start right when students walk in the door the next day. Yet another method would be to have representations of all of the main characters' empty minds placed around the classroom and divide the class the groups. Each group could be assigned a character, or the groups could rotate and put something in each of the character's minds. (Burke)

Book 17

23. Gender-Bender: During many scenes of *The Odyssey*, a reader begs the question, "What does gender have to do with the interactions between the characters?" In this activity, have students rewrite a scene and change the gender of the characters in it. Ask questions such as, "How might they act differently?" and "What do certain characters get away with due to their gender?" (Burke)

Book 18

24. Jigsaw Discussion: When discussing a book with a lot of depth, teachers don't always have the time to fully flesh out every discussion topic. In this case, use the jigsaw discussion and organize the class into groups, each one with a specific focus and assigned color of pen or marker. Type up or write out the discussion topic, along with several follow up questions and allow seven to ten minutes for each group to discuss. Then, give two minutes for them to write out some contents of their discussion in their group's color. When finished, have them rotate to the next discussion topic table, keeping their color. As the class moves, allow time for each group to read the previous groups' answers, discuss those, and reply with their own thoughts. When class ends, collect the sheets with answers and thoughts and grade participation based on the colors of each group. Due to the groups having assigned colors, you can observe their final products and assess their participation and effort. (Burke)

Book 19

25. Pageant of the Masters: In Los Angeles, this remarkable event asks groups to stage different classical paintings in real life. In order to adapt this activity to a story or an epic poem like *The Odyssey*, divide students into groups and assign specific passages for scenes. Encourage each group to do a still life pose, then act the passage out as a play. Setting up, assigning roles, and practicing will most likely be the first of a two-day lesson. Next, have the students perform their short scenes for the class, and allow the class to discuss the importance of what is going on within the specific scene. This activity allows for some fun and creativity, as well as providing good visuals and revealing the significance of specific passages. Another option for this activity would be to make it an assignment and actually have the students bring in shoebox dioramas or still-life scenes to present on. (Burke)

Book 20

26. Oprah Book Club: Divide the students into groups and assign them scenes. One will be the host of the talk show, another the author (Homer in this case), and the rest will be the cast of characters in that scene. Have the students host a talk show in which interviews are done with the host and the characters about the happenings of that book. Afterwards, allow the students in the audience to ask questions and probe for more information about that part of the epic poem. (Burke)

Book 21

27. Executive Summaries: On three by five notecards, write out major plot points or events of a book from *The Odyssey*. As students walk in, hand them each a notecard in no particular order. Have the students analyze the importance of what happened and explain the reasons why it occurred on the other side of

the notecard. Then, tell them to get into a line at the front of the room in chronological order according to their events. However, the key is that they may not talk in order to do so. This silent aspect simply makes it more fun and challenging, and the students seem to enjoy it a little more. Once in order, start with the first student and ask him or her to step forward in front of the line and explain what he or she wrote on the back of the plot point card. In doing so, many points are discussed in a fun and engaging way. This is good to do with chapters or books that are long, complicated, or have many changes in location. (Burke)

Book 22

28. Imagery Activity: Certain parts of epic poems are just too good for words. When this happens, draw! Choose a particular passage to read aloud to the students. Have them close their eyes and picture what is happening as you read. Discuss the imagery, mood, and tone of the passage. Then, encourage them to find another four passages (not yours!) that are full of imagery as well. Have them write out the lines, and circle the imagery words that make each passage easy to visualize. Then, have them draw their favorite one using art supplies. By finding passages with imagery, and drawing a particular one, they gain practice with that literary device and also a deeper understanding of several specific parts of the book. (This idea and the resources for it were taken from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School.)

Book 23

29. Appointment Discussion Questions: Announce an appointment time and have the students get with their designated partner. Have them answer discussion questions to the best of their ability with just the two of them, while you walk around between the groups encouraging the discussions. As the groups finish, pair them up with other groups and allow them to relay, discuss, and debate their answers in pods of four. Continue this process until the entire class is together and ready to discuss as a whole. By starting small and working up to larger groups, each student gets to have his or her voice heard yet many angles and answers are discovered.

Book 24

30. Read Aloud: Students never get tired of being read to, especially at the end of a long epic or novel. Read the last book aloud, and have them note big ideas, cultural values, and themes as you read.
31. That Was Then, This Is Now: At the end of a text, especially a long text like *The Odyssey*, it is neat to see just how far the characters have come since the beginning. It is always interesting to notice changes and to reflect back on the beginning and middle of the epic. As a class, create a before and after list in order to compare the ways in which the characters and towns have changed over the course of the story. As ideas are being put on the board and into the students' notes, discuss *why* those changes are note-worthy and just *how* they were made. (Burke)

Graded Discussion Rationale

Graded discussions are great not only because they encourage students of all personalities to participate, but because they can give you a feel for what the students are truly thinking about the book. Many opinions, reactions, responses, and conversations held during an all-period, graded discussion wouldn't normally occur in a lecture-based setting. Below is a guide for facilitating a graded discussion for Books 14 and 15, which are two books brimming with discussion topics. The students have read enough of the book, spent enough time annotating and highlighting big ideas and motifs, and are more than half-way through the epic at this point.

Graded Discussion Guide

Step One: Preparation

- Take a class list and create partners based on your students' participation in class.
 - Pair talkative students with talkative students.
 - Pair quieter students with quieter students.
 - If you don't have an even number, choose a child who is on the quieter side to be by himself or herself. (This guarantees that this shyer child will be in the discussion the entire time, giving him or her more opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas.)
- Set the desks up in a circle.
 - One for you as the teacher.
 - One for each set of partners.
 - You will only use half the desks in your classroom.
- Create a PowerPoint with the rules. (This is simply how I choose to do things, you may decide to explain things differently to your students.)
 - 1st slide: List of partners with one column as "inside" and one column as "outside." Tell the inside partner to sit down at a desk when they walk in. tell The outside partner to stand behind their partner's desk.
 - 2nd slide: Basic rules of the discussion.
 - No interrupting.
 - No changing the subject completely if there are still things to be said.
 - No talking about anything other than *The Odyssey*.
 - Use the text to back up your points.
 - No sitting down if you are on the outside.
 - Books must be open all the time!
 - Taking notes is a must!
 - If the person on the outside wishes to enter the discussion and speak, they must tap their partner on the inside nicely.
 - If that person isn't quite ready to be out, he or she can wave the partner off.
 - Yet everyone needs to have a turn.
 - People on the outside must not speak, for thirty voices in a discussion such as this one is too many.
 - 3rd slide: Point values.
 - 1 point for talking and saying something related.
 - 2 points for adding new information to the discussion.
 - 3 points for backing your response up with the text.
- Create scoring guide.
 - Draw the circle of desks, one for each partnership, in a circle on a piece of paper.
 - Place the students' names on the desk, dividing each desk into two since there are two people at the same desk.
- Come up with good discussion questions from Books fourteen and fifteen.
 - While your students may bring his or her own, sometimes there can be a lull in the conversation and you as the teacher needs to step in with something.

- It is always good to have extra discussion topics, questions, or prompts, considering there is so much to be talked about for these two books!
- Below this guide, I have added a sample.

Step Two: The Graded Discussion

- After the preparation, it is time to begin!
- Have the students come in and find their places.
- Explain the rules using the PowerPoint (or other means).
- Begin the discussion yourself with something worth noting in book fourteen.
- Allow students to comment, add new information, or bring the class to points in the text about this issue freely.
- As each student speaks, draw a line from you to their desk, and then from their desk to the next speaker's desk. Continue to do this as each person speaks.
 - Eventually, the circle of desks looks like a spider web. (My students called it the web of participation.) They liked to see it when I was finished, because it showed how many times they spoke compared to their classmates.
 - It encourages participation from all areas of the circle.
 - Also, as they receive extra points for adding new information or bringing up the text, add those points to their desk with their name.
 - At the end of the discussion, create a point value for As, Bs, Cs, Ds, and Fs.

Graded Discussion Questions

“Here I sit, my heart aching, broken for him, my master, my great king...” (b.14 ll. 43-45).

1. What TWO big ideas did you mark in the first stanza of 14? Why did you mark these? Why might they be important for our reading of the rest of this book?
2. At the bottom of 302, what literary device did you mark as Eumaeus talks to Odysseus?
3. On page 303, line 63, we see “And you replied, Eumaeus loyal swineherd” for the first time in the set of chapters. Why would the narrator put us into the role of Eumaeus? To what effect? Also what big idea are we noting in this entire paragraph?
4. In Eumaeus’ description of the suitors on page 304, what big idea comes out? What does this show us about the suitors?
5. As Eumaeus talks to Odysseus, he tells him Penelope or Telemachus will never believe that “this beggar” has news about Odysseus. Why would this be? What does Odysseus learn here about what’s gone on in his absence?
6. Let’s read page 307, lines 196 to 200 again. There’s a really cool play on word order and pauses here. What’s going on?
7. What parallels are there between Odysseus’ lie about who he is and what really happened to him and his men? Why would there be so many similarities?
8. What do we learn about Greek hospitality on page 313?
9. Odysseus tests Eumaeus’ hospitality one more time before they go to bed. What ritual do they seem to partake in here?

“Balance is best in all things” (b.15 ll. 78)

10. What pieces of advice and warning does Athena give Telemachus as he’s unable to sleep?
11. In lines 66-68, what imagery reveals Telemachus’ newfound determination of purpose?
12. It’s literary device time. What literary device did you mark on line 62?
13. What literary device did you mark in Menelaus’ speech to Telemachus on lines 125-130? Now mark repetition and turn to page 144. It’s the same paragraph, almost word for word. What is the effect of this?

14. We saw a prophecy in Book 2, on page 98. What was that prophecy and how was it read? What prophecy happens that precedes Telemachus' departure?
15. While Menelaus is unsure how to interpret this prophecy, who steps in? How does this person interpret the prophecy? What comparison is made?
16. As evidenced by Pisistratus' and Telemachus' conversation on 325-326, what can sometimes be a fault of Greek hospitality?
17. In what two places did the setting shift in this book? You should be marking them so you are able to follow along well.
18. How does Odysseus test Eumaeus? Why does he feel the need to do this again?
19. What does Odysseus find out about this father and mother?
20. How did Odysseus' mother treat Eumaeus?
21. How does Eumaeus tell Odysseus Penelope's been acting? Why do you think this is?
22. How did Eumaeus end up in Ithaca? What big idea comes out through his story?
23. What prophecy does Theoclymenus interpret at the end of book?

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Three-Point Discussion



1 point – Refer to the answer given by the speaker before you.

Example: Yes, I agree with Jeff's point why the character acted the way he did, but . . .

2 points – Add new information to the discussion.

Example: I feel that perhaps the real motivation behind his behavior is his relationship with his mother as seen in . . .

3 points – Refer to the text to back up your point.

The scene on page 40 when he says, "My mother influenced my every decision."

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Post-Reading Strategies Rationale

After my classes and I finished reading *The Odyssey*, it felt as though we had conquered something major (and we had!). We spent **six weeks** reading (or to many of my students, trudging) through and combing for details, big ideas, themes, literary devices, etc. It was time to celebrate! We held a “Fagels and Bagels” party in class. Robert Fagels was the translator of our edition, the bagels came from “Einstein Bros.,” a phenomenal place in Indianapolis. The students loved the party, and I got to hear feedback from them about what they loved, how they learned, and most importantly, what didn't work so well in that unit. It was a casual way to inquire and receive honest feedback from them, which as a new teacher, was amazingly helpful for me.

However, we weren't *quite* done with Homer's epic poem. As with any great work of literature, post-reading activities are important, especially for assessment. First, we students were required to write a paper. In this section, you will find the paper topic and requirements. This topic was simply what my ninth grade team of teachers decided upon. It can be changed or altered to fit any focus within *The Odyssey*. Because I taught freshmen, much of the writing was done in class. I found that I needed to break many of their middle school habits and more actively encourage them into writing analytically and formally. I also used a strategy called “Quotation Sandwiches” developed by the University School of Milwaukee that helped students integrate quotes and support from the text. My freshmen struggled with quote integration, supporting their claim, and making the most out of their evidence. This analogy was a fun way to reach them on these subjects.

Finally, the fun part. If there is one thing that I can **highly** recommend from this entire resource, it is the graphic novel project. My students had more fun with this one than anything else we did during the entire semester, and the final product was something my students were proud of. Each student was assigned a book of *The Odyssey* (or half of one depending on how many students I had in that class) to illustrate. While Homer wrote an interesting tale, my students now had the opportunity to illustrate it. In this section, you will find the handout that I used to describe this project, as well as the sign-up sheet so that I could keep track of who was doing what page. I suggest posting that sign-up sheet as a reminder to the students as well. Once the projects were complete, we donated one of our class books to the library, and another one I kept for my future classroom. I bound the

students' work together using skills that I learned in a Ball State University book binding class, but any teacher could find a way to bind the pages or take them to a local craft store for instructions. My students loved that I was a part of the project, yet it was entirely theirs at the same time. They encouraged each other, brought in various art supplies, and wanted to show the final product off to other classes when they were finished. This project was a way to solidify the epic in their minds, and an academic experience that they will never forget.

For this section of my thesis, I adapted information from Mary Basson, Kate Gay, Elaine Griffin, and Gareth Hinds whose websites are listed in the Works Cited.

Graphic Novel Assignment

We've finished reading *The Odyssey*! To celebrate, we are going to make **OUR OWN GRAPHIC NOVEL** as a class. You will each draw a Book # out of the cookie jar and will be responsible for **illustrating the scene(s)** from **that particular book** onto 12x12 white cardstock.

Requirements:

- You must choose your scene(s) carefully; you only get **one page** in the class book.
- You must stick to the **happenings of your specific book** in *The Odyssey*.
- You must use both sides the 12x12 white cardstock I gave you.
- You must write the title of your book, book number, and your name on the **front of your page**.
- You must be **creative**, use **color**, and *have fun*!

Remember: We are binding these together to make an *entire class book*, so **quality and effort** are a **MUST**! If everyone does his or her share, the book will look great!

Suggested steps for this project:

1. Take a concentrated look at your assigned book.
2. Write down the 4-5 major events or happenings in chronological order.
3. Decide on a layout (how many boxes, text, etc.)
4. Do a rough draft sketch on a separate piece of paper.
5. Make your final draft.

Write down your **Book #** here: _____

Please write your name next to the book you will be illustrating. Write clearly because the point is that I must be able to read these 😊.

Book 1: _____

Book 2: _____

Book 3: _____

Book 4: _____

Book 5: _____

Book 6: _____

Book 7: _____

Book 8: _____

Book 9: _____

Book 10: _____

Book 11: _____

Book 12: _____

Book 13: _____

Book 14: _____

Book 15: _____

Book 16: _____

Book 17: _____

Book 18: _____

Book 19: _____

Book 20: _____

Book 21: _____

Book 22: _____

Book 23: _____

Book 24: _____

Note to Teachers: If you have more than twenty-four students, consider breaking some of the larger, more complex books into two parts (first half and second half). Some good books for dividing are: four, eight, eleven, fifteen, seventeen, and nineteen.

***The Odyssey* Essay Assignment**

In Book 17, Eumaeus warns Odysseus, who is disguised as a beggar, that going to the palace and facing the suitors might be dangerous. Odysseus replies:

Stones and blows and I are hardly strangers.
My heart is steeled by now,
I've had my share of pain in the waves and wars.
Add this to the total. Bring the trial on.
But there's no way to hide the belly's hungers—
what a curse, what mischief it brews in all our lives!
Just for hunger we rig and ride our long benched ships
on the barren salt sea, speeding death to enemies. (17. 309-316)

Which two of man's greatest desires create the most suffering in a person's life and/or society? Write a 4-paragraph essay in which you analyze the destructive nature of two desires. Use the events in *The Odyssey* to support your points.

Structure of Essay:

Introduction

Title, author, brief summary of the epic

Introduction of topic – the nature of desire in general

Brief introduction to Freud and the Id

Thesis: (Everyone will use the same thesis for this paper)

Characters in The Odyssey struggle to control their desires. However, it is through the struggle with the Id that mankind and society evolve.

Body Paragraphs

Topic sentence – each one argues different desire

Expansion on why desire is problem to man

Connection to the epic

Set-up evidence/example from epic

Evidence (passage with correct internal citation)

Analyze passage in terms of the long-lasting effect of that desire in the epic

Conclusion

Conclude how mankind has evolved through the struggle with one of the desires.

Must move beyond the literary work

Details:

Prepare outline and passages prior to writing essay

Audience is your classmates: We've all read the epic but must be convinced of the validity of your insight

Consistent 3rd point of view (no "I" "you" "me" etc.)

Expansion beyond evidence is necessary

Important Dates:

Introduction of essay: [teachers, insert date here]

HW: Pre-Writing

Quotation Sandwiches: [teachers, insert date here]

HW: Outline

Outline due: [teachers, insert date here]

In-class writing: [teachers, insert two dates here]

[Teachers, insert the lab or classroom number here]

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011.

Recipe for the Quotation Sandwich

The Quotation Sandwich is composed of the following three ingredients:

1. **The Top Slice: An Argumentative Claim**
2. The Meat: A Quote that supports the claim
3. *The Bottom Slice: Commentary about the quote*

Claim. Quote. Comment.
Easy to Remember!

The claim makes an interpretive statement, presenting a portion of the essay's argument.

The quote provides concrete, textual support for the claim statement.

The commentary functions to tie the quote to the claim.

Claim and Commentary are as the slices of bread that surround the "meat," or the quote, of the sandwich.

Sample Quotation Sandwiches

1. From *Romeo and Juliet*

At the start of the play, before she has met and fallen in love with Romeo, Juliet is a dutiful daughter, willing to take direction from her elders. When Lady Capulet asks her if she can like Paris, she responds agreeably, "I'll look to like, if looking liking move. / But no more deep will I endart mine eye / Than your consent gives strength to make it fly" (1.3.103-105). Juliet's willingness not only to accommodate her mother's request that she meet Paris but also to suspend judgment on him until she receives her mother's approval is surely the mark of an obedient daughter.

2. From *1984*

Winston Smith's romantic relationship with Julia leads to his becoming a political rebel. Even in the midst of his most tender, first moment with her, he realizes that having an affair with Julia "was a blow struck against the Party" (112). Winston's romantic relationship causes him to behave in ways expressly forbidden in a totalitarian society, namely taking part in secret meetings and developing an attachment with another person.

THREE CONDIMENTS FOR SERVING UP QUOTATIONS

We like to think that quotations get dry and lonely when snatched from their cozy beds of text. When we use quotations in Quotation Sandwiches, we ease their transitions into new homes with a few condiments to make the quotation comfortable and the writer's argument palatable!

Quotation sandwich formula:

Bread: **Claim**

Meat: Quotation

Bread: *Commentary*

The DAB

The Dab is the simplest form of serving up a quotation. It calls for the smallest number of writer-supplied words. Linking the quote to its claim, a Dab provides just the bare minimum of words to announce the appearance of a quotation from a text. The Dab is useful when the writer has already established the context of the quotation in previous sentences and needs only to supply the exact quotation to make the point of the claim.

Even though Penelope does not know Odysseus is home yet, her conniving ways impress him. When Penelope finishes her speech, "staunch Odysseus glowed with joy to hear all this—his wife's trickery luring gifts from her suitors now, enchanting their hearts with suave seductive words, but all the while with something else in mind" (18.316-319). *Penelope's manipulation of the suitors validates Odysseus' sacrifice and tireless quest to return to her.*

The DOLLOP

The Dollop involves a bit more writing as it links the quote to its claim. Providing significant detail from the story, the Dollop is the appropriate condiment when the reader needs to be reminded of the context of the quotation—the details of the scene in which the quotation occurs.

After Odysseus arrives in Ithaca and has supplanted himself in his own home, Athena inspires Penelope to encourage presents from the suitors. Even though Penelope does not know Odysseus is home yet, her conniving ways impress him as he "glow[s] with joy to hear all this—his wife's trickery luring gifts from her suitors now, enchanting their hearts with suave seductive words, but all the while with something else in mind" (18.316-319). *Penelope's manipulation of the suitors validates Odysseus' sacrifice and tireless quest to return to her.*

The LOTSA SAUCE

Lotsa Sauce requires extensive writing surrounding just a tiny quotation, phrase, or important word from the text. Lotsa Sauce allows the writer both to maintain coherence with the claim and to maintain the writer's own tone while still grounding the development of the argument in the text.

Even though Penelope doesn't realize it, she is just one of the pawns in the set up of the suitors. Athena inspires her to encourage presents from the men, which does more to give them hope for marriage. She has dealt with their theft of her food and belongings for long enough, and when he sees this, Odysseus is impressed with her ability in "enchanting their hearts with suave seductive words" **and realizes why he loves his wife** (18.316-319). *Penelope's manipulation of the suitors validates Odysseus' sacrifice and tireless quest to return to her.*

Box Lunch

Stacking up the Pieces: Complete Quotation Sandwiches

Read "Thank You Ma'am" by Langston Hughes.

Complete the following quotation sandwiches according to the formula:

Bread: **Claim**

Meat: Quotation

Bread: *Commentary*

Fill in the areas that I have not already done. Obviously do not use my words, thoughts etc...use your own and show me what you've got!

1. **Bread:** Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones is a gutsy woman who realizes immediately that the young Roger needs care and love.

Dab:

Meat:

Bread:

2. **Bread:**

Dollop:

Meat:

Bread: The physical strength exhibited by Mrs. Jones is symbolic of her inner strength, integrity, and courage.

3. **Bread:**

Lotsa Sauce:

Meat: "The door was open. He could make a dash for it down the hall. He could run, run, run, run!"

Bread:

Annotated Bibliography

Beard, Carla. "Lesson Plans for The Odyssey by Homer." *Web English Teacher*. 2000. Web. 17 Apr. 2012.

I have always enjoyed the website *Web English Teacher*. There are lesson plan ideas for nearly every topic, as well as interesting background information for you and your students before you begin novels, plays, or epics. While I didn't include these ideas in my thesis, this website was a starting place for me to brainstorm for the activities. Just browsing through the site will offer inspiration and insight into whatever book you may be teaching.

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/odyssey-lesson-plans.html>

Blair, Sheryl. "Gods and Mythology." *A Site for Teachers and Students of Language Arts and ESOL*. Web. 17 Apr. 2012.

This website is great to use for the first few books of *The Odyssey*. It brings up good discussion questions that can be used throughout, but also presents ideas such as heroes, character traits, journeys, and gender roles that can be seen as themes throughout the book. As your students read, make sure to ask general questions like these to promote discussion of the epic as a whole instead of just the individual book or books you may be reading that day.

<http://www.sblair.com/odyssey/discussion.htm>

Burke, Jim. "103 Things to do Before/During/After Reading." *The English Teacher's Companion*, 1998. Web. 17 Apr. 2012

This website was the most useful in creating the activities section of this project. Burke listed 103 activities to use before, during, or after reading a text. While they were specific to teaching *The Odyssey*, many of them would work very well with this text. I suggest using *The English Companion* for any work of literature.

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/assignments/reading/103readingactivities.htm>

Draeger, Glen. *Milestone Education: World Literature*. Milestone Education. Web. 17 Apr. 2012

This website is excellent for passage-related questions because it cites a passage for every question it asks. While it isn't organized in the best fashion, if you have some time to pick and choose which ones you think would be best for your class, it may be worth your effort.

<http://www.millstoneeducation.com/worldLit/c8thru12/odyssey/questions.php>

Sparks, Julie. "English Comp. B." Course home page. San Jose State U, Fall 2008. 16 Sept. 2008.

This website is a great resource for study-questions. I pulled many of my study questions from this source due to the numerous options the authors presented for each book. Many of the “who, what, why, when, and where” questions came from this website, but there is also a section at the very top of the page that has general questions. In my last graded discussion, I brought some of these summative questions up, and they were excellent for those last couple of books when the students were finally putting everything together.

http://www.ajdrake.com/e240_fall_03/materials/authors/homer_sq.htm

Harris, Susan. “The Odyssey Study Questions.” *Creighton University*. Web. 17 Apr.

2012.

This website breaks each book of *The Odyssey* down into its own section and has specific, thought-provoking questions. It also encourages the students to “pay close attention to” certain things and “try to determine” what may happen next or the true intentions of certain characters. While the discussion questions are phenomenal, the other aspects that it encourages are very helpful. I used these questions for fodder during class discussion, but also as quick-writes before class.

<http://mockingbird.creighton.edu/english/fajardo/teaching/eng120/homer2.htm>

Hinds, Gareth. *GarethHinds.com*. Gareth Hinds. Web. 17 Apr. 2012

This website was the inspiration behind my graphic novel assignment. Gareth Hinds is a noted illustrator, and on his website you can flip through several of the pages. Many students needed some example on how to do a graphic novel and this website was fun to put up on the projector. I also recommend buying a copy of his book for your classroom, and this website has links to do that.

<http://www.garethhinds.com/odyssey.php>

Hyperboi32. “The Odyssey Quiz.” *Fun Trivia: The Trivia and Quiz Community*. Web.

17 Apr. 2012

This website is excellent to recommend to students for review towards the end of the epic poem. If you plan to give a test, they will need to review from the beginning of the epic, yet you may not have time in class to do an entire review session. This website offers a 96 question review of names, places, literary devices, etc. The students can simply click on the answer and it turns green or red to show whether they were right or wrong.

<http://www.funtrivia.com/newflash/trivia.cfm?qid=156710>

McIntosh Forgy, Jennifer. “A Unit that Incorporates Various Writing Activities

Related to the Epic Poem *The Odyssey*, To Be Used in a Heterogeneously

Grouped Ninth Grade Class.” *Kentucky Council of Teachers of English*. July

1998. Web. 17 Apr. 2012

This website has ideas for journal entries throughout *The Odyssey*. These journal entries are always good homework assignments or quick-writes for the beginning of

class. When students have something in writing, they are much more likely to share it with the class. This website can make for some interesting discussions and banter among students.

<http://www.kcte.org/lesson-plans/odyssey/forgy4.html>

SparkNotes Editors. "SparkNote on The Odyssey." *SparkNotes.com*. SparkNotes LLC.

2002. Web. 25 Apr. 2012

While this site is always good for reviewing and remembering major events, I found it also helpful when it came time to give quizzes. For some books, it was important for my students to read closely and consider the locations, order of events, and new characters met in order to understand the plot completely. For these quizzes, I would simply copy and paste the book summary and then replace place and character names with blanks. While I don't recommend these quizzes for every book, every once in a while it offered a quick, easy-to-grade assessment and review for my students who struggled with close reading.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/odyssey>

"Teaching Tips." *Mythweb*. Teachers. Web. 17 Apr. 2012

This website is a compilation of teachers' material from all different disciplines and age levels. Whenever one has an excellent idea that can venture into other areas of English and other grade levels of students, they post it on this website with a title and a paragraph or two explaining it. I found the Biopoems idea useful, and used it in the beginning of the semester. However, many of these ideas would work as activities when teaching *The Odyssey*.

<http://www.mythweb.com/teachers/tips/moretips.html>

Works Cited

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The University School of Milwaukee. *Austin Schools Curriculum*. Web. 17 Apr.
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- Blair, Sheryl. "Gods and Mythology." *A Site for Teachers and Students of Language
Arts and ESOL*. Web. 17 Apr. 2012.
- Burke, Jim. "103 Things to do Before/During/After Reading." *The English Teacher's
Companion*, 1998. Web. 17 Apr. 2012.
- Harris, Susan. "The Odyssey Study Questions." *Creighton University*. Web. 17 Apr.
2012.
- Homer; *The Odyssey*. Fagles, Robert. New York City: Penguin Group, 1997. Print.
- McIntosh Forgy, Jennifer. "A Unit that Incorporates Various Writing Activities
Related to the Epic Poem The Odyssey, To Be Used in a Heterogeneously
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- SparkNotes Editors. "SparkNote on The Odyssey." *SparkNotes.com*. SparkNotes LLC.
2002. Web. 25 Apr. 2012
- Sparks, Julie. "English Comp. B." Course home page. San Jose State U, Fall 2008. 16
Sept. 2008.

Appendix: Activity Resources

Activity 2: Pronunciation Key

Agamemnon a-ga-MEM-non	Arete AR-eh-tee	Helios HEE-lee-os
Laertes La-AIR-teez	Argive AR-guyv	Proteus PRO-tee-us
Aiaia AY-ah-yah	Odysseus Oh-DIS-yus	Hephaistos Heh-FES-tos
Laistrygonia Lass-trih-GO-nee-ah	Artemis AR-tem-is	Pylos PEE-los
Aias AY-us	Ogygia Oh-GIDG-ah	Herakles HAIR-ah-kleez
Lakedaimon Lack-ah-DAY-mon	Orestes Or-ES-teez	Hermes HER-meez
Aigisthos Ah-GIS-thos	Danaans DAN-na-ans	Seirenes SEH-ree-neeZ
Laodamas Lay-OD-ah-mas	Demodokos Deh-MAH-dokos	Skheria Scai-REE-ah
Aigyptios Eg-GIP-tee-ohs	Peisistratos Pay-SIS-tra-tos	Ikarios Ick-AR-ee-ohs
Aiolia Ay-OH-lee-ah	Penelope Pa-NEL-oh-pee	Ino EE-no
Malea MAIL-ee-yah	Elpenor EL-pen-or	Teiresias Te-REE-see-us
Akhaians Ah-KAY-ans	Persephone Per-SEFF-oh-nee	Telemakhos Ta-LEM-ah-kos
Medon ME-don	Erebos AIR-eh-bos	Kalypso Kah-LIP-so
Akhilleus Ah-KILL-ee-us	Phaiakians Fay-AH-kee-ans	Thrinakia Thrih-NAH-kee-ah
Melanthios Meh-LAN-thee-os	Eumaios Yew-MAY-os	Kikones KICK-oh-neeZ or Kih-KOH-neeZ
Alkinoos Al-KIN-oh-us	Phemios FEE-me-ohs	Thyestes Thy-ES-teez
Menelaos Men-eh-LAY-ohs	Eurykleia Yer-RIK-lee-ah	Kirke KER-kee
Antinoos An-TIN-oh-us	Philoktetes Fil-OCK-teh-teez	Kharybdis Kah-RIB-dis
Mentes MEN-teez	Eurylokhos Yer-RILL-oh-kos	Klytaimnestra Kly-tem-NES-tra
Antiphates An-TIFF-ah-teez	Polyphemos Pol-ee-FEE-mos	Ktesippos KTEH-sip-pos
Mykenai My-KEN-ay		Kyklopes KY-clo-peeZ
Aphrodite Af-fro-DY-tee	Eurymakhos Yer-RIM-ah-kos	Note the tendency to move the accent back to three syllables from the end.
Ares AR-eez	Pontonoos Pon-TOH-no-us	
Nausikaa NOW-see-ka	Poseidon Po-SI-dun	Also note the absence of the soft C (Kirke--not Circe).

Activity 3: Plot Wall

Book 4

1. _____ and _____ are celebrating marriages of their son and daughter
2. _____ and _____ arrive and are welcomed in Sparta
3. _____ recognizes _____ at dinner – he looks like _____
4. They feast and discuss the cunning moves of _____ at Troy
5. NEXT DAY: _____ tells _____ his own accounts of Troy
6. We are informed of the fates of _____
7. Update: _____ still alive but imprisoned by _____ on her island
8. _____ and _____ set sail for sandy Pylos
9. Back in Ithica, _____ and _____ hear of Telemachus' trip
10. _____ hears from Medon (herald) that _____ is gone
11. _____ sends a phantom – her sister – to calm her

Book 5

1. All gods (except _____) gather on Mt. Olympus to discuss _____' fate
2. _____ inspires _____ to intervene
3. _____ is sent to _____'s island to demand his leave
4. _____ complains, but submits to _____' will and builds boat with supplies
5. _____ sets sail
6. _____ sees him and realizes what the other gods have done
7. _____ stirs up a storm, _____ almost drowns
8. _____ comes to his rescue – gives him veil to keep him safe
9. _____ presents a river, and he finds cover in a forest

Book 6

1. _____ appears in a dream to _____
2. _____ is encouraged to go to the river to wash her clothes – many men are courting her and soon she will choose a husband
3. _____ and her handmaids are playing, when _____ appears naked
4. Odysseus pleads for assistance, and _____ tells him to wash up
5. _____ makes him look handsome and _____ starts to fall in love
6. Nervous about people's opinions, _____ gives _____ instructions to find the palace and approach her mother, _____, for help
7. _____ prays to _____ for hospitality,
8. _____ sets out for the palace

Activity 5: Appointment Partners

Student Day Planner

Time	Appointment
8am	
9am	
10am	
11am	
12pm	
1pm	
2pm	
3pm	
4pm	

Keep in your binder at all times!

Activity 6: Big Idea Hunt

Big Ideas	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4
Revenge				
Golden Mean				
Wisdom gained through Suffering				
Hubris/ Humility				
Chaos and Order				

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011.

Activity 7: Discussion Guide

Divine Intervention and Greek Hospitality in Books 4-6

In your groups, go through books 4-6 and discuss the presence of Greek hospitality and divine intervention. Start on page 124 and get as far as you can. If you have something “boxed” or annotated about either of these two major ideas, announce it to your group and explain why you annotated it. Have your group annotate it in their own books, as well as write in on this sheet. I will collect these sheets as your group’s ticket out of class. If you finish early, go through and do the same group discussion for one of the big ideas (loyalty, golden mean, hubris/humility, revenge, wisdom gained through suffering, and chaos and order).

Book 4:

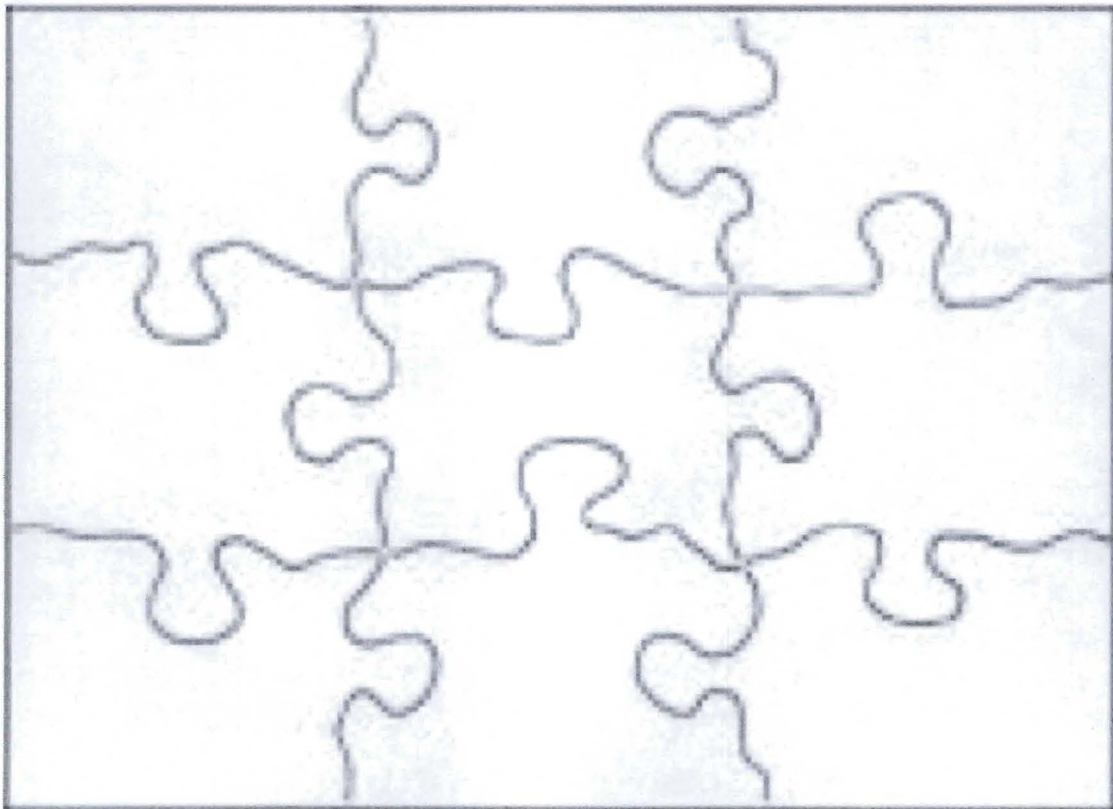
Book 5:

Book 6:

Activity 12: Plot Puzzle

Book 9 Plot Puzzle Key

1. King Alcinous prompts Odysseus to tell his story (he begins in Book 9)
2. Cicones' island for too long – lost men in battle – barely escaped
3. Lotus Island – lotus eaters – again, barely escaped (men didn't want to leave)
4. Cyclops Island – couldn't just stop for some supplies – got curious
5. **Main event:** Odysseus' encounter with Polyphemus - entrapment
6. Has to blind and trick Polyphemus to escape
7. Gets away, but yells back – "I am Odysseus"
8. Polyphemus prays to Poseidon
9. Odysseus has troubles to come – plagued by Poseidon for years



Activity 16: Board Diagram

Book 11 Board Diagram Notes

Elpenor (lines 55-90)

- crewman who broke his neck falling from Circe's roof (lack of the GOLDEN MEAN)
- begs to be given a proper burial (another cultural value – respect for the dead)
- fear of the gods wrath if they don't (DIVINE INTERVENTION)
- Odysseus promises to make it happen

Tiresias

- reveals the reason for punishment – blinding Polyphemus
- foretells Odysseus' fate – will return home, reclaim wife and palace, then worship Poseidon (FORESHADOWING)
- warns Odysseus not to touch the flocks of the Sun at Thrinacia – they are Helios' only cattle
 - "touch them and you will lose all your men, come home late in a stranger's ship"
- even foretells his peaceful death surrounded by loved ones (FORESHADOWING)
- before he leaves, Odysseus asks him about his mother and how to communicate with the spirits

Mother, Anticleia

- at first, he is filled with grief upon seeing his mother in the land of the dead
- unexpected – he left her alive when he sailed for Troy
- Odysseus asks her for an update – how did you die? What of my wife and son?
- died of grief for him, killed herself
- Penelope is still waiting for him (LOYALTY)
- Tries to hug his mother several times – becomes frustrated by her ghost appearance

Asks for a break to sleep – Queen Arete urges him on, with support from Echeneus
Then King Alcinous steps in and asks about Trojan heroes he may have seen in Hades

Agamemnon

- Flanked by all his comrades (LOYALTY)
- Odysseus is shocked to see him and asks about how he died – battle? At sea?
- tells Odysseus of the murder by Clytemnestra and Aegisthus (REVENGE)
- don't even trust anyone too closely – even your wife! When you come home, sneak in! (lack of LOYALTY)
- asked about Orestes – Odysseus replied, "Why ask me that? I know nothing."

Achilles

- What brings you to the underworld Odysseus? Cunning, master of war.
- Says that he would rather be alive and slaving on Earth than ruling the dead in Hades
- asks about his son, Neoptolemus

Ajax

- refuses to speak to Odysseus and slips away "blazing with anger" (REVENGE)

- Odysseus begs him to “conquer your rage, your blazing, headstrong pride” (HUBRIS)
- an Achaean who killed himself after he lost a contest with Odysseus over the arms of Achilles

King Minos

- King of justice, judging the dead, who crowded around to hear his verdicts

Orion

- Huge hunter, rounder of beasts

Tityus

- Sprawling on the ground, two vultures on either side, digging into his liver
- Punishment for dragging off Leto, consort of Zeus, in all her glory (REVENGE)

Tantalus

- agonized by hunger and thirst as punishment (REVENGE)
- water just out of reach, fruit trees just out of reach (didn't follow the GOLDEN MEAN)

Sisyphus

- eternally struggling
- pushing a boulder over a hill only to have it roll back down when it reaches the top

Heracles

- Called out to Odysseus calling him a “luckless man” like himself

Becomes overwhelmed with souls asking about the world above (CHAOS)

Runs back to his ship and immediately sails away

These are notes for a board diagram. The best way to do this is to draw an “entrance” to the underworld on the top left corner of your board. Then, place each character in a circle that ends at the bottom left corner of your board. Walk your students through each person that Odysseus meets, using these notes to help you keep track of his point in the underworld journey.

Activity 19: Research

“You” Eumaeus Possibilities

You promoted some interesting theories as to why Homer directly addresses the swineherd with lines like, “And you replied, Eumaeus, loyal swineherd.” “You” suggested that the addition of such direct address gives the impression that Odysseus tells the story as he reminisces with Eumaeus. “You” suggested that lines such as this one foreshadow that Eumaeus will receive some great reward from Odysseus because Odysseus seems to address him as an equal. “You” also suggested that Homer intends for the reader to identify with Eumaeus and his loyalty to Odysseus.

Note: This information was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Activity 20: Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy: Higher level Questioning

This is a hint sheet for you as you are writing your discussion questions throughout The Odyssey. You should aim to use at least two DIFFERENT types of questions per assignment.

<u>The Cognitive Taxonomy</u> by Benjamin S. Bloom	Question Leads	Process Words
<i>1. Knowledge</i>	Who is...? What is...? Where are...? When was...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name• List• Define• Label• Recall
<i>2. Comprehension</i>	Why did...? How does...? Can you explain...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain• Describe• Review• Restate• Summarize
<i>3. Application</i>	How would you solve...? Can you demonstrate...? What principle is operating...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply• Show• Solve• Demonstrate• Illustrate
<i>4. Analysis</i>	What factors caused...? Can you compare and contrast...? Can you categorize...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze• Differentiate• Categorize• Compare• Examine• Diagnose
<i>5. Synthesis</i>	What if...? What do you propose? Can you create...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create• Design• Plan• Suppose• Originate• Combine
<i>6. Evaluation</i>	What is your opinion? What is the best solution? How do you feel about...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose• Evaluate• Rank• Defend• Appraise• Decide

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Activity 21: Graded Discussion

Graded Discussion Lesson Plan

Focus: Discussing and debating events and character developments in Books 20 and 21 of *The Odyssey*.

Objectives:

1. Students will discover new character developments in Books 20 and 21 of *The Odyssey*.
2. Students will have a better understanding of the events of Books 20 and 21 of *The Odyssey*.

Materials:

1. Homework from the night before: two discussion questions from different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
2. Desks in a circle
3. *The Odyssey* books

Strategies:

1. Graded discussion
2. Whole class conversation

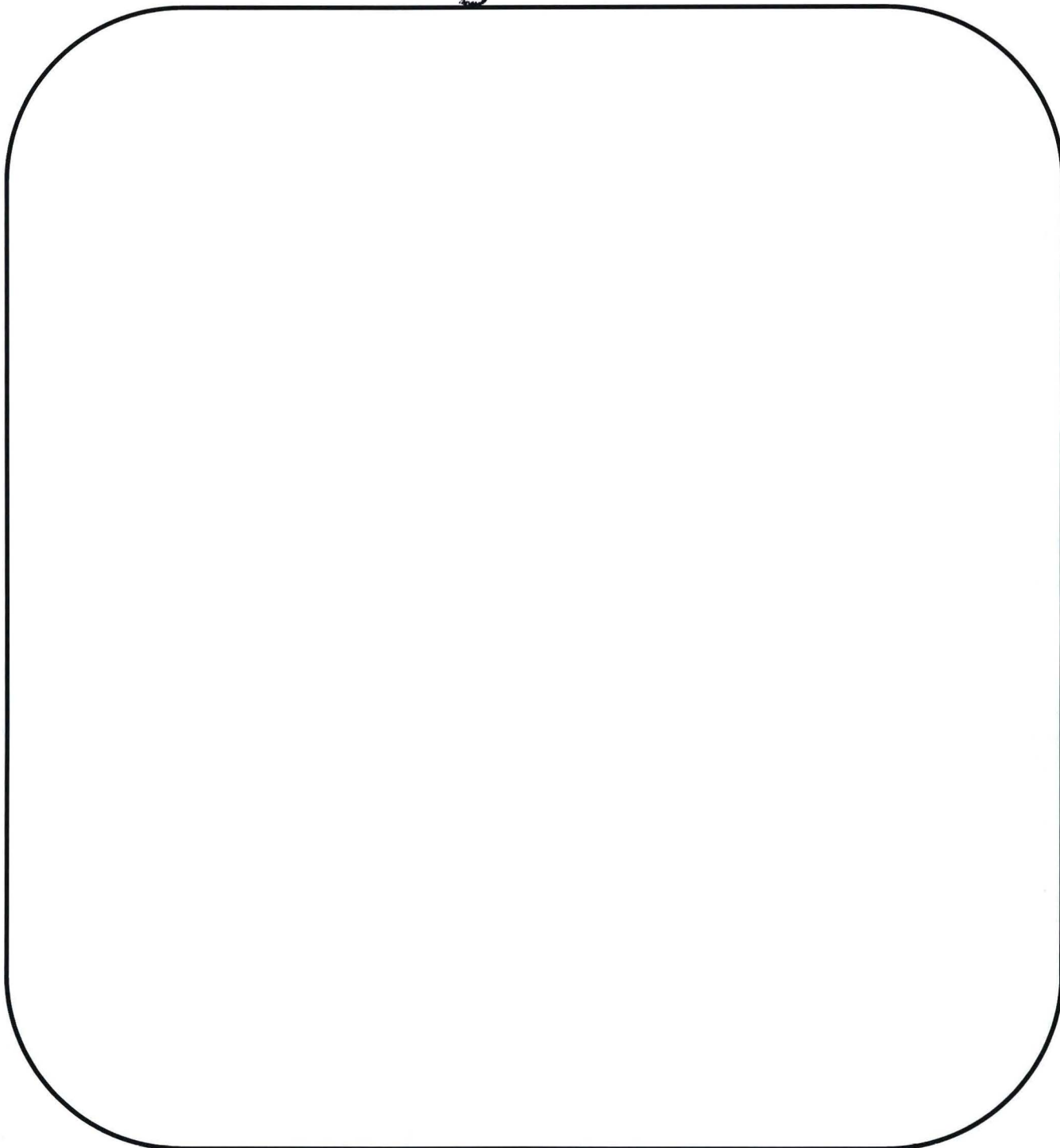
Procedure:

1. Greet the class and have them find their seating assignments (whether they are in the circle or standing outside) by looking at the diagram of partners on the board.
2. Have the students in the inner circle start the conversation by posing a question and directing the class to a place in *The Odyssey*.
3. As the students on the outside circle want to join in, they must tap their partner as a way of asking to switch.
 - a. This keeps the conversation intimate, yet versatile.
 - b. It also helps the discussion move fluidly in a way that allows many topics in one class period.
4. Draw a "conversation map" by marking a line from the first student who speaks to the second and third and so on.
 - a. Use this to grade participation at the end of the discussion.
 - b. You are the only person who needs to create one of these; the students don't pay attention to you.
5. Post the conversation map in the room so students can see how much they are participating in class and how neat the map looks when everyone does.

Evaluation:

1. I will know that my students discovered new character developments in Books 20 and 21 of *The Odyssey* by observing their annotation marking throughout the discussion (informal assessment).
2. I will know that my students have a better understanding of the events of Books 20 and 21 of *The Odyssey* by reading their journals tomorrow.

Book 22: Slaughter in the Hall



Lines _____

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Book 22: Slaughter in the Hall

1. Write 4 passages from Book 22 of *The Odyssey* that use verbs and adjectives so vivid that you can visualize the scene. Underline the words that create such striking imagery. Record the line numbers for each passage given.

Lines _____

Lines _____

Lines _____

2. Turn the paper over and draw a moment from one of the above passages. At the bottom of your drawing, assume the persona of someone or something in your passage. Use showing details and have fun with your writing as well as your drawing!

Note: This handout was taken, in its entirety, from Kate Young, an English and Humanities teacher at North Central High School in the year 2011

Activity 29: Appointment Discussion Questions

Names: _____

Book 23 Discussion Questions

1. Why does the text refrain from making Penelope recognize Odysseus outright? Why does Penelope insist on testing Odysseus even after all that he has done in the hall?
2. What is Telemachus' reaction to Penelope's greeting of Odysseus? What does this show about his maturity at this point?
3. Why is it appropriate that the couple's bed should be involved in the main test of Odysseus' identity? Who made the bed and what is remarkable about it?
4. Around line 300, Odysseus recounts the prophecy that Tiresias had made about the King's further adventure and death in old age. Why would Homer remind us of this prophecy, just as the poem achieves its goal of bringing Odysseus home and reestablishing him successfully as master of Ithaca?
5. What future problems does Odysseus see as a result of the killing of the suitors? What does Odysseus want those outside his palace believe is happening within the palace?
6. Who is responsible for holding Dawn at bay while Penelope and Odysseus spend their first night together? *And of course*, what does this show?
7. What does Odysseus tell Penelope about his next journey?